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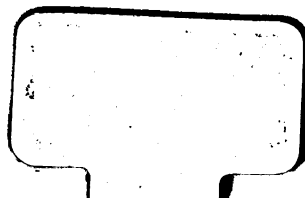
HIS  
PERSONAL PRESENCE

*REV. T. W. THOMAS*





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**HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE.**

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# HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE;

OR,

## THE SECRET OF A BRIGHT AND FRAGRANT LIFE.

BY THE

REV. T. W. THOMAS, B.A.

CURATE OF ST. GILES', NORWICH.

*WITH INTRODUCTION BY H. F. BOWKER, Esq.*

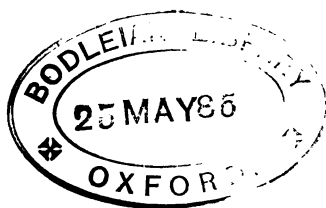
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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE great secret of the Christian life, the Presence of Christ, is well handled in the following pages.

The conscious reception of Christ's life as the portion of each believer in His Great Name, and as the common property of the whole Church, is being preached and taught among us with reviving force and power. The Holy Spirit is manifestly preparing the Church for some great conflict, and this is one of His methods.

"Lo, I am with you," was one of the most pregnant utterances of our Lord after His resurrection. He might have given it as a promise, and attached to it conditions for its fulfilment. He did not do this, but states it as a great fact. "I am with you." To believe this is to receive great

blessing. The testimony of Scripture, so well adduced in the following pages, will help many to receive it. "In the word of a king there is power;" and as Christ is permitted to exercise His kingly authority with us, so is His Presence felt. May all who read this little book become partakers of the blessings so well described and commended by the writer.

HENRY F. BOWKER.

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I.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE :*  
*THE CHRISTIAN'S DWELLING PLACE.*

"FATHER, WE KNOW THE REALITY OF JESUS CHRIST."

Words used by a workman in prayer, Oct. 14, 1875.)

Reality, reality,  
Lord Jesus Christ, Thou art to me!

Reality, reality  
Of grace and glory dwells with Thee.  
How real Thy mercy and Thy might!  
How real Thy love, how real Thy light!  
How real Thy truth and faithfulness!  
How real Thy blessing when Thou dost bless!  
How real Thy coming to dwell within!  
How real the triumphs Thou dost win!  
Does not the loving and glowing heart  
Leap up to own how real Thou art?"

—MISS F. R. HAVESGAL.

"To be abiding in Christ is to be found in Him under all circumstances of life. The cares, difficulties, perplexities, and temptations of each day find you in your *Home*, panoplied in the Divinely-provided shelter. You are there protected and satisfied. . . . Your soul finds, WITHIN THE CIRCLE OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE, all it needs—it overflows with the fulness of God's house, it drinks of the river of God's pleasures. There abiding, the believer goes forth without anxiety. He can say from actual experience—'Thou art my *hiding-place*.'—*The Life of Faith*.

"Faith in its feeblest form . . . hisping the very alphabet of Divine truth, and asking in broken and stammering accents, '*Does GOD really Live?*' . . . '*Is He The Living One?*' . . . We must realise *His Presence*. . . . How earnestly do the saints of old, and especially in their seasons of trial, cleave to the thought of *This Personal Presence*; in other words, a thirst for '*The Living GOD*'! . . . The Shepherd-leader craved the assurance of a *Living God—an ever-present Guardian*."—REV. J. R. MACDUFF, D.D.

"Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy Presence" (Ps. xxxi. 20). "*In Thy Presence is fulness of joy*" (Ps. xvi. 11).

"Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling-place—our HOME—in all generations" (Ps. xc. 1).

"The Lord, . . . even the Most High, thy *habitation*" (Ps. xci. 9).

## I.

### *HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE : THE CHRISTIAN'S DWELLING PLACE.*

"In having all things and not Thee, what have I?  
Not having Thee, what have my labours got?  
Let me enjoy but Thee, what farther crave I?  
And having Thee alone, what have I not?  
I wish not sea nor land ; nor would I be  
Possessed of heaven, heaven unpossessed by Thee."

*"My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. . . . If Thy Presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (Ex. xxxiii. 14, 15.)*

*The Presence of Jesus !* What a soul-inspiring greeting at the commencement of another year ! Overshadowed by the Divine Presence, the child of God can right thankfully bid farewell to the *past*, around which cluster so many blended memories of joy and sorrow, and calmly and bravely step out into the untried, unknown *future*. The month of January commences a fresh stage in the great Christian journey, a new chapter in the volume of life's history. The solemn step across the threshold calls for close converse with our souls. We raise



our Ebenezers, inscribing thereon, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." "Surely goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life."

We send forth glad shouts of praise for countless streams of Heaven's mercies, which have brought such refreshment to our very doors; and with retrospective glance we behold with shame and sorrow our "Way in the valley"—filled with unsightly monuments of neglected duties, lost opportunities, wasted talents, broken promises, sins of unfaithfulness—and with many a pang we "see" and "know" what we have "done." But how shall we step forward into the new, untried future? We shall be entering a dark, unexplored pathway; but whither that path may lead us, we cannot say.

What dark seas we may have to cross; what rocky headlands to shun; what hidden reefs and shoals and quicksands to avoid; what events may fall out, and how all may terminate,—*this* is wisely and graciously hidden from our view.

But surely it will be a soft pillow of soul-comfort for us to remember that *Jehovah-Jesus*, the Everlasting, Unchangeable, Faithful One, has promised to be the Guide, the Leader of His people. And a comfort, moreover, to remember that our Heavenly Father knows the path to heaven, and is familiar with all its turnings and perils, lights and shades; that He

knows, too, the individual path, as well as His own work in the soul, of each celestial traveller. Yes! He knows, He cares, and will provide; and with such a persuasion right bravely can every new-born soul step out into the unknown future, singing—

“Through the love of God our Saviour,  
All will be well;  
Free and changeless is His favour,  
All, all is well.

We expect a bright to-morrow;  
All will be well.  
Faith can sing through days of sorrow,  
All, all is well.  
On our Father's love relying,  
Jesus every need supplying,  
Or in living, or in dying,  
All must be well.”

Let me recall the story of the brave little lad, <sup>A brave little lad.</sup> who hushed his own fears and those of others amid the blinding storm. The wind was blowing a gale aloft, waves were running mountains high, the ship was reeling amid the surging billows, the planks were creaking, and the heart of the stoutest sailor was darkened by fear. But amid the deafening thunder of the storm, beating in wild fury around his unsheltered head, there stood the child, calm and fearless, and pointing with his tiny finger to the pilot who was steering with brawny arm through

the churning waves, "*My father,*" he said, "*is at the helm.*" Would you, dear friend, weather the tempests of an unknown, untried year, and stand calm and unmoved amid storms and angry seas—deep calling to deep, all God's storms and billows passing over you? Fix your eye on *your Father at the helm*; grasp the glorious fact—*Jesus lives! Jesus lives! His presence with you.* Then—however dark the outlook, however black the starless, midnight sky, however thorny and intricate your path, come what may—you will be able to point to your Divine Leader and say, "This God is my God for ever and ever; He shall be my guide even unto death"—through death—beyond death—for ever and ever.

Oh, what mercy! should the very Form of Him who is the ever-living, ever-loving Saviour—the "Friend who loves at all times"—be revealed by the Holy Spirit amid the surrounding darkness; and should the music of the Good Shepherd's voice be as intensely real to us to-day as to Moses of old—"My Presence shall go with thee, and I shall give thee rest."

The Presence of Jesus as "all and in all"—it is of this I wish to write, as I am guided by the Teacher of all teachers—*God the Holy Ghost.*

But, before I pass on, there is one side-thought

which I would throw out. I wish it most distinctly to be understood, that my intention is not to write one word in favour of the doctrine of the *Lord's bodily presence as still upon earth*. Such teaching is directly opposed to the words of the Holy Ghost in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. God forbid that I should lead any one into the meshes of Papal error, which becomes too often the winding staircase into the black gulf of infidelity.

There was a real bodily presence of the Lord Jesus on earth eighteen centuries ago—there is a real bodily presence of Jesus now in heaven. But, let me say emphatically, there is *no real bodily presence of the Lord Jesus now on earth—no real bodily presence in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper or in the consecrated elements of bread and wine*. This is Papal error pure and simple.

But there is a *real, spiritual, Perpetual Presence* Rev. H. ;  
Moule. of the Lord Jesus in His Church on earth, by the *power of the Holy Ghost*. As the Rev. H. Moule, Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge, very happily puts it, "The supreme work of the Holy Spirit is to acquaint the soul with Christ; hence *the in-*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. John xiv. 2, xvi. 5, 10; Heb. x. 12, 13. Also cf. Art. IV. of Church of England.

*dwelling of the Holy Spirit as the Divine Teacher results by holy necessity in the indwelling of Christ as the Divine Guest."*<sup>1</sup>

It is on this real, spiritual presence of the Lord Jesus I am anxious to reflect.

A Visit to  
Keswick.

Some time ago, I was staying at Keswick in the lovely summer-time, and on one of those quiet Sunday afternoons—when the grand old surrounding mountains, with their distant peaks so hoary with age, and the smiling vales and rippling waters seemed to speak so clearly of the Master Himself—I went to a special service for "*men only*."

The Rev. C.  
A. Fox.

One of the speakers gave a few words of loving counsel. One word I shall ever remember with deepest thankfulness.

"*Young men*," said he, "BELIEVE IN THE PRESENTNESS OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE."

Oh yes, dear friend, this is the secret of all restful, joyful, successful life—living in, going forth in the very presence of the Lord Jesus.

Ponder a few texts—

Gen. iii. 8.—"They hid themselves from *the presence* of the Lord."

1 Chron. xvi. 27.—"Glory and honour are *in His Presence*."

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rom. viii. 9, 10; Camb. Bible for Schools; John xiv. 18, 23, 28; Matt. xviii. 20, xxviii. 20; Gal. ii. 21, iv. 19; Rev. iii. 20.

Ps. xvi. 11.—“In *Thy Presence* is fulness of joy.”

Ps. xxxi. 20.—“Thou shalt hide them in the secret of *Thy Presence*.”

Ps. lxii. 5.—“*His Presence* is salvation.”

Ps. xli. 11.—“Cast me not away from *Thy Presence*.”

Ps. xcv. 2.—“Come before *His Presence* with thanksgiving.”

Ps. cxl. 13.—“The upright shall dwell in *Thy Presence*.”

Isa. lxiii. 9.—“The Angel of *His Presence* saved them.”

Jonah i. 3.—“Jonah rose to flee from the *Presence* of the Lord.”

Acts iii. 19.—“Times of refreshing from the *Presence* of the Lord.”

1 Cor. i. 29.—“That no flesh should glory in *His Presence*.”

2 Thess. i. 9.—“With destruction from the *Presence* of the Lord.”

Jude 24.—“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the *Presence* of His glory.”

Ex. xxxiii. 14, 15.—“*My Presence* shall go with Thee, and I will give thee rest.” “If *Thy Presence* go not with us, carry us not up hence.”

“Lord, Thou hast made Thyself to me  
A living, bright reality ;

More present to faith's vision keen  
Than any earthly object seen ;  
More dear, more intimately nigh  
Than e'en the closest earthly tie.

Nearer and dearer still to me,  
Thou *living, loving Saviour* be ;  
Brighter the vision of Thy face,  
More-charming still Thy words of grace ;  
So, life shall be transformed to love,  
A heaven below, a heaven above."

Should the Holy Spirit be pleased to lead one precious soul, through the reading of these pages, into the heart-experience of this beautiful hymn, it will be a rich reward, and to God shall be all the praise and glory.

## II.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

CONDITIONAL ON

*THE GREAT CHOICE.*



"Yield yourselves unto God" (Rom. vi. 13).

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve. . . . As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. xxiv. 15).

"A Covenant—"Now, Lord, I give myself to Thee,  
I would be wholly Thine;  
As Thou hast given Thyself to me,  
And Thou art wholly mine;  
Oh take me, seal me as Thine own,  
Thine altogether—Thine alone."

—F. R. H., July 1876.

"Henceforth, may sin have all my grief;  
And Jesus all our hearts."

"See that you buy the field where the Pearl is; sell all, and make a purchase of salvation. . . . Oh! what a portion is Christ! . . . sell, sell, sell all things for Christ."—*S. Rutherford's Letters*.

"Let me join myself to the Lord in a perpetual covenant—a covenant not to serve Him only in pleasant places, and when it is so easy to follow Him, but to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth."—M. H., *Memorials of a Quiet Life*.

"All I need, I find in Christ; and all God needs for my acceptance He finds in Christ; therefore have we confidence. . . . If you are longing for Christ, He is already your choice, your desire."—DESHAM SMITH.

"Faith brings the sinner to Jesus with all his sins and guilt upon him, saying, 'Just as I am.' But the moment he possesses Christ, he goes in before God, as Christ is. It is no longer, 'Just as I am,' but —'Just as He is.'"

II.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

CONDITIONAL ON

*THE GREAT CHOICE.*

"MOSES refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward; by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."<sup>1</sup> Moses' choice.

Yes! his choice was made, he halted not between two opinions. By the grace of God the decisive step of faith was taken; he descended by one step from the place of honour and splendour to the place of suffering and degradation. And was he not right? Did he ever regret his choice? Never, never.

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi. 24-27.

God's mighty power enabled him to break with sin and the world, and become a pilgrim from Egypt to the better land, even the heavenly; and Moses discovered a priceless treasure, an unfading reward, which was summed up in this one promise, "My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." That Divine Presence was manifested to him on Horeb, in the burning bush; in Egypt, according to the promise—"Certainly I will be with thee;"<sup>1</sup> right in the midst of the waste, trackless wilderness-path, "My Presence shall go with thee;" in the Pillar of Cloud and Fire,—yea, right onward for ever; he *enjoys that sweet Presence to-day*, and will do so throughout the countless ages of eternity.

Would *you*, dear friend, enjoy this unspeakable gift as your eternal portion? Your *choice* of Christ must come *first*.

IN Adam, or  
IN Christ,  
which?

While you refuse to take the blessed step of faith out of self into Christ, God regards you—not merely as *like Adam*, hiding from that gracious Presence (Gen. iii. 8) amid the trees of sinful and worldly habits, but—as *IN Adam, in union with Adam*<sup>2</sup> inheriting sin, disobedience, death (like a dead branch in a dead tree). *That is the position you hold by nature, that is the ground you occupy*

<sup>1</sup> Exod. iii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rom. v. 12, 18, 19.

this moment, *that* is the atmosphere you are breathing every second—an atmosphere charged with disease, sin, death—unless you have made the good choice for Christ, and invited Him to become the Guest of your heart, the rightful King upon the throne.<sup>1</sup>

For, remember, in the unerring scales of Divine justice all men are weighed and judged, not with reference to *what they are*—to their morality, respectability, good deeds or otherwise—but with reference to *the place they occupy* IN ADAM or IN CHRIST (the second Adam); “*not what they are, but where they are.*” The Rev. E. Hopkins.

*Is it in fallen Adam you stand at this moment?* If so, you are living *at one with* sin, unpardoned sin, guilt, condemnation, death—death both legal and spiritual—which must terminate in the second death. You stand not where God can bless, but where in holy, righteous anger He must condemn, consume, and destroy. “*He that believeth not the Son*” (i.e., he that refuses the grace of the Holy Spirit to take the step out of the old position of condemnation and death into the new position of life and blessing IN CHRIST) “*shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*”<sup>2</sup> “Abideth!” present tense—now—this moment—by night

<sup>1</sup> Cf. S. Luke xix. 5-7.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. John iii. 36.

when you draw the curtains around your pillow—by day when you walk the street, sit at your office desk, laugh in company. Oh! ponder it—the Holy Ghost says it—“*The wrath of God abideth on you.*”

*Is it IN CHRIST you stand at this moment? Then you stand in union with the divinely-accepted Sacrifice for sin, in union with God's well-beloved Son; and you are “accepted IN the Beloved,”*<sup>1</sup> “complete IN Him.”<sup>2</sup> You stand *on new ground*, and *the only ground* where God can pardon, adopt, bless; and in virtue of your vital union with Jesus, His merits are counted to you (who have none), you “are made the righteousness of God IN *Him*”<sup>3</sup> (*in Jesus*); *in Him* you “have exhausted the penalty of sin and are free from its claim—in a word, in *Him* you are ‘justified from sin.’”

Rev. H.  
Moule.

“Has He blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against you? Then shake off self-righteous dependences and legal fears. If I be in Jesus, then I am pardoned and accepted. ‘He is near that justifieth me;’ let us stand together before the throne of God, at the bar of His infinite justice. I plead guilty; but has my adversary therefore a plea against me? I plead ‘*not guilty*,’ for *I am in Jesus*, and He has redeemed me from the sin to which I pleaded guilty before. My

<sup>1</sup> Eph. i. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Col. ii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. v. 21.

adversary's plea therefore falls to the ground, and my faith in Jesus is accounted to me for righteousness. If sin sometimes prevail, I must not indulge in legal fears, but go closer to Jesus and get more of the spirit of adoption."

But, with a sigh YOU are forced to acknowledge, that you know nothing of this new standing in grace, within the blood-besprinkled Refuge.

Now, just think for a moment: has your position out of, away from Christ brought you *rest*—the real, sweet, calm, unbroken rest of which the promise to Moses speaks? Your conscience tells you it has not.

Let me tell you of a group of young men, for whom Pleasure had baited her hook, and not in vain. They came into a certain house one morning jaded, weary, sick with themselves and the world. One of them, throwing himself into an easy-chair, exclaimed, "I am sick of this sort of thing, and would give anything to live a different sort of life; but there's no life worth living now: the days of brave knights are over."

"Yes, they are over, it is true," replied one of his comrades, "and yet there is a life worth living still—the Christian-life, the Christ-life. Walk after Him and you will not walk in darkness nor fall in despair."

Has ever such a dark thought crossed YOUR mind ?  
*Life not worth living !*

Yes, alas ! it has ; but only because you have forsaken the Fountain of living water, and hewn out for yourself cisterns, broken cisterns, which hold no water. Pitcher after pitcher you have taken to the wrong source. The "golden goblet of sin, the jewelled tankard with sweet draughts of worldly joys " have brought you no rest.

The trailing  
ivy.

Behold the tiny ivy !—it trails along the ground, throws its rootlets around a stone, coils around the decaying stump of a tree, or anything else which may chance to lie in its path ; but let the tiny aspirant reach the foot of the giant oak, or the base of the stately mansion, and straightway it will shoot its way heavenward, until its coils embrace the top-most branches, or it hangs in graceful festoons from the mansion's lofty turret.

The moral is too obvious. The natural man knows not his heavenly calling ; he entwines his affections around things of time, sense, and the world—around his grovelling idols of the dust. His aspirations shoot not heavenward ; the rootlets of a heart, which is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," pin him to the dust.

But let him find his way, by the gentle leading of the Holy Spirit, to the foot of the Cross ; let him,

by a definite act of faith, take his place as "a man in Christ,"<sup>1</sup> and place his foot on the first rung of the heavenly ladder, and the strong coils of a vigorous, living faith will enable him to rise from "amid the pots" of sin and the world, pierce through things of time and sense, and soar "upward, onward, heavenward, homeward," until he stands a pillar in the Heavenly Temple, a star in the Saviour's crown for ever.

Surely, such a *life is worth living*—the Christ-life, the heavenward, soaring life.

Such a life leads on to the sweet enjoyment of the perpetual, overshadowing presence of Jesus, from the moment you accept the proffered grace of the Holy Spirit to take the step out of the old position into the new—*out of selfhood into Christ*; who, by His death on the Cross, "finished transgression, made an end of sins, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness"<sup>2</sup> for needy, destitute sinners; and in whom you at once become a new, living branch in a "new tree, and enjoy union with a new root, being grafted on to a new stock. 'If any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creature.' This is not to improve the old, but to be translated into a new position. THEN your debts are paid; the past is cancelled. But this is not all; you get an

Rev. E.  
Hopkins.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Dan. ix. 24.



entirely new standing. Your old name is set aside, forgotten, buried for ever. You have a new name. 'Of God you are *in* Christ Jesus, who is made to you righteousness;' <sup>1</sup> and, 'There is therefore NOW NO *condemnation to those who ARE IN CHRIST JESUS.*' <sup>2</sup> This is not a privilege that comes to the believer by *degrees*; it is *complete and absolute at once*. The moment the transition takes place, the believer stands, not on the ground of probation, but on the ground of redemption."

And being *accepted in the Beloved*, justified on the ground of the blood <sup>3</sup> of Jesus and by the appropriating hand of faith, you have peace with God; you stand in grace; you rejoice in hope of the glory of God.<sup>4</sup> You are a member of Christ, a child of God; possessing a *child's place* in His family, and a *child's heart* to cry, through the Spirit of adoption, "Abba, Father;" <sup>5</sup> an heir of the kingdom of heaven, partaker of the Divine nature,<sup>6</sup> and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit you are being "changed into the image of Jesus, from glory to glory,"<sup>7</sup> until at last you "see the King in His beauty"<sup>8</sup> and be "like Him."<sup>9</sup>

Two Golden  
Blessings.

IN ONE WORD: let your choice be made, and *immediately TWO BLESSINGS are yours. Acquittal*

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 30.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. v. 1, 2.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Gal. iv. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Isa. xxxiii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. v. 9.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Peter i. 4.

<sup>9</sup> 1 John iii. 2.

*by the Judge ;—and a gracious acceptance into the arms of a loving Father ; and what good thing will our Heavenly Father deny His child ? “Come, therefore, for all things are now ready.”*<sup>1</sup> Come, take your shelter in the blood-besprinkled home of the dying love of Jesus. “I am come to place my trust beneath the sprinkled blood,” were the words of an awakened soul during a mission at S. Giles, Norwich, some years ago. Follow his steps, and “a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.”<sup>2</sup>

The full reward that Jesus gives you now is *Himself*. Once did He give Himself up to death The Unspeakable Gift. FOR you, as your Substitute ; now He is the Father’s unspeakable gift *to you*, to dwell with you, to be your Sanctuary, your Abiding-place for ever.<sup>3</sup> Jesus gives not as the world gives. “The world gives not freely ; it only lends to recall ; it only exchanges and barter, often taking more and better things from us than it offers. The world’s gifts are not what they seem. They do not enrich, they do not last ; above all, they are dead things—they cannot give life.” It is said of the Duke of Alva, The Duke of Alva. that he starved his prisoners of war on one occasion, after giving them quarter, saying, “Though I promised you your lives, I promised not to find

<sup>1</sup> S. Luke xiv. 17.    <sup>2</sup> Ruth ii. 12.    <sup>3</sup> Ps. xci. 1, 9 ; 1 John ii. 28.

meat." Thus the world deceives its votaries in the end.

Rev. W. H.  
Hewitson.

But the Lord Jesus gives, and *gives Himself*—Himself "the light, life, salvation, the hope of glory—Himself the storehouse of all the heavenly goods—Himself the treasure of all the riches of Divine goodness—Himself the fountain from which rivers of living water are ever flowing—Himself the sea, without either bottom or shore, which makes all the waves of grace, mercy, and love pass on the believing soul—Himself the Sun of the highest heavens, which scatters and throws all the rays of Divine wisdom and knowledge both among the angels above and the believers below" (see NOTE at end of the book).

OUR HOME.

Marvellous love! *He gives Himself—the Living, Present, Personal Saviour.* Yes, Himself, in *His perpetual—spiritual presence, as the Home, the Sanctuary, the Abiding-place* for all His redeemed ones. What a blessed thought! There is a *Home* even here, in the midst of the trackless desert, for the child of God. *That Home, that Abiding-place, is Jesus Himself.* Moses felt this when he wrote<sup>1</sup>—"Lord, Thou hast been our *dwelling-place, our HOME* in all generations."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "He that has made his *home* in love, has made his *home* in God, and God has made His *home* in him" (Rev. James Vaughan on 1 John iv. 16).

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xc. 1.

"On the Cross Christ is our propitiation—the Rev. R. Hopkins source of our salvation—the ground of our confidence. In glory Christ is our standing—our completeness before the throne. In His spiritual presence here on earth He is the *Sanctuary* of our souls."

"The perpetual presence of Christ is the highest Rev. James Vaughan article of the whole Christian creed. It was no figurative language that our Lord employed when He said, 'Lo, I am *with you, always*, even unto the end of the world.' His crucifixion is only the base of His resurrection, and His resurrection is only the base of His ascension, and His ascension is only the base of His perpetual presence."

Dear friend! have you fled to Him as to a blood-besprinkled refuge? If so, salvation is yours. Henceforth His overshadowing presence is offered as the home of your soul. Abide in His presence, and you shall have life abundant and find rest unto your soul.

"A FULL REWARD BE GIVEN THEE OF THE LORD GOD OF ISRAEL, UNDER WHOSE WINGS THOU ART COME TO TRUST."<sup>1</sup>

"My heart is fixed, Eternal God,  
Fixed on Thee!  
And my immortal choice is made,  
Christ for me ;

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<sup>1</sup> Ruth ii. 12.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE.*

He is my Prophet, Priest, and King,  
Who did for me salvation bring ;  
And while I've breath I mean to sing,  
Christ for me!

Let others boast of heaps of gold,  
Christ for me;  
His riches never can be told,  
Christ for me;  
Your gold will waste and wear away,  
Your honours perish in a day,  
My portion never can decay ;  
Christ for me.

In pining sickness or in health,  
Christ for me;  
In deepest poverty or wealth,  
Christ for me;  
And in that all-important day,  
When I the summons must obey,  
And pass from this dark world away,  
Christ for me."

III.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

CONDITIONAL ON

*A STANDING OF DISTINCT SEPARATION FROM  
THE WORLD.*

"Soil not thy raiment, saint of God,  
 If thou the high reward wouldst win !  
 Pure from the world thy garments keep ;  
 All round thee are the snares of sin.  
 White is thy robe ; oh ! stain it not !  
 It came from heaven ; 'twas washed in blood ;  
 Defile it not with earthly taint ;  
 Preserve it to the day of God."—H. BONAR.

"Which have not defiled their garments ; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy"—(Rev. iii. 4-)

"Let thy garments be always white"—(Eccles. ix. 8).

"Verily, I have seen the best of this world, a moth-eaten, thread-bare coat ; I purpose to lay it aside. . . . Keep your garments clean, as you would walk with the Lamb in white. . . . Up, up with Christ ; and down, down with all contrary powers."—*Rutherford's Letters*.

"What a wonderful power is CHRIST in a man's soul over the world !"—D. S.

"What can the world profit thee without Jesus? . . . He who clings to the creature shall fall with the falling ; he who embraceth the Saviour shall stand firm for ever. . . . Thou canst not have both pleasures, the pleasure of this world now, and that of reigning with Christ hereafter. . . . *If thou canst purge thyself from worldly affections, Jesus will willingly dwell with thee.*"—THOMAS A KEMPIS, *Like unto Christ*.

"A pearl cast before swine is not more out of place than is a professed follower of Jesus in the haunts of revelry or in the society of scoffers. . . . *Conformity to the world* will never convert it. . . . *Conformity to the world* is weakening the backbone of the Church, and thus far diminishing its power to raise the world up towards God. . . . 'Be not conformed to the world' applies to the stage, ball-room, wine-cup, and to everything which would turn God's earth into a '*Vanity Fair*.' *Conformity to the world* puts out the candle Christ kindled ; it destroys the very leaven which He has prepared to purify and sweeten, and save a 'world lying in wickedness.'"—DR. CUYLER.

"How perilous are bad companionships !" . . .

"The essence of non-conformity to the world lies within, not without, . . . in the cultivation of a deeper spiritual life, and in a growing conformity to the mind and will of God."

"Resist the first approaches of evil." . . .

"The power of a sanctifying thought is great. Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts."—SIR EMILIUS BAYLEY.

### III.

#### *HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

##### CONDITIONAL ON

#### *A STANDING OF DISTINCT SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD.*

THE Divine presence was only promised to Moses when he had taken up a position of distinct

##### SEPARATION FROM EGYPT.

1. And if the child of God is to live and walk and abide in the Presence of Jesus, he must go *to Jesus without the camp*. Redemption and distinct separation from the world are the only stepping-stones into enjoyment of His presence. You remember how ingenious were the compromises proposed by Pharaoh to Israel to prevent this distinct separation.

“SACRIFICE TO YOUR GOD IN THE LAND.<sup>1</sup> . . . GO NOT VERY FAR AWAY.<sup>2</sup> . . . GO NOW, YE THAT ARE

The  
Four Com-  
promises.

<sup>1</sup> Ex. viii. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. viii. 28.



MEN.<sup>1</sup> . . . GO YE, SERVE THE LORD, ONLY LET YOUR FLOCKS AND YOUR HERDS BE STAYED.”<sup>2</sup>

Alas! our Church, in these latter days, is full of these halting Christians,—borderers,—waverers,—undecided,—half-hearted followers of Jesus, occupying a broad, common platform with the world. How can they hope to enjoy the “*presentness of His presence*?”

But *the simple fact that we know Him* whom our soul loveth, and are abiding in His presence, *places us in a position of separation from the world.*

This is precisely what Moses said in Exod. xxxiii. 15, 16—“If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and Thy people have found grace in Thy sight? IS IT NOT IN THAT THOU GOEST WITH US? SO SHALL WE BE SEPARATED, *I and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.*”

Remember, however, that the man who still leaves his heart in the world, and refuses to break with sin and worldliness, can never hope to discover this blest refuge—this sanctuary—the abiding presence of Jesus.

The Sword of  
the Spirit.

A few months ago, a clergyman of the North of London was preaching to his overflowing congregation, and endeavoured to press home upon the hearts

<sup>1</sup> Ex. x. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. x. 24.

and consciences of his hearers the absolute necessity of breaking with the world, as the only Divine condition of *peace* with God. Just like the shaft of the practised archer, which speeds forth with unerring aim to the mark, that word pierced through the joints of the harness, and found a lodgement in at least one man's heart. At the close of the service he followed the preacher into the vestry, and, with the arrow still rankling in his wounded heart, told him how *the word* had found him out—how he had vainly hoped he was a Christian of some sort, though a Christian without peace—how he had given way to one great besetting sin,—that of gambling on the Stock Exchange, which had driven from his breast the gentle dove of peace; but he added, “It will cost me £1000 to break loose from this sin, but *I think peace with God is cheap at £1000!*”

Samson, rocked to sleep on the lap of the crafty Delilah, when “he wist not that the Lord had departed from him,”<sup>1</sup> is but a picture of the child of God rocked into gentle, fatal slumber in the lap of the world, and the Lord is departed from him.

The World! Alas! what multitudes flock “to her feet, and kiss her magic wand and consult her oracle, though mocked and duped, and mocked and

<sup>1</sup> Judges xvi. 20.

duped again!" What crystal palaces she builds for her votaries in the air! How gorgeously and extravagantly she paints her scenery to catch the eye and engage and enchain the heart of the unwary! But withal what emptiness! What a hideous skeleton is disclosed behind! LISTEN!

Thirsty still.

"I was at the zenith of earthly happiness. On returning from the ball, I took a hasty review of the evening I had passed as I lay sleepless upon my pillow. The glitter—the music—the dance—the excitement—the attention—the pleasure—all passed before me. But, oh! *I felt a want I could not describe.* I sighed, and, throwing my arm over my head, whispered to myself these expressive words, '*Is this all?*'" (*Mrs. Winslow's Life*).

Life in the West End.

"Oh! my heart sinks within me," said a clergyman of the West End about two years ago, "when I think of the London season, with its teeming multitude of young ladies swept along in one constant whirl of gaiety and worldly life,—ceaseless dressing, and dining, and driving out,—a ceaseless succession of calls, balls, theatres. Then, when the season is over, they are sent away for change of air, weary, haggard, jaded, without energy or life for anything. Many take to dram-drinking (young as they are) to stimulate their ebbing life; many more find an early grave. And, with shame be it said, all this sad spectacle is presented to the world

*because they have been introduced to a fashionable world by Christian parents!"*

Oh! that this little book may be a help to some against the world, defined by the late Brownlow North as "*a compound of persons, places, and pursuits which do not glorify God, and bring no honour to the name of Jesus.*"

Definition of  
the World.

One thing is evident. You must decide to part either with the world (I mean the world's principles, motives, and associations), or with the saving grace and overshadowing presence of the Lord Jesus.

Look at Lot,<sup>1</sup> descending to the low plains of worldliness, "*pitching his tent toward Sodom,*"<sup>2</sup> then sitting in the very gate of the doomed city, where "the people were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly;" "*lingering*"<sup>3</sup> at the last moment; "*saved yet so as by fire;*"—a wretched life which knew nothing of the light of God's countenance, and at last it went out like a candle, guttering in its socket, leaving an ill savour behind. And had not the Holy Ghost spoken of him as "*just Lot*"—"that righteous man,"<sup>4</sup> we should have entertained grave doubts whether his soul was saved at last or no.

Beacons:  
Lot.

Look at Jehoshaphat, a man of God indeed, and yet

Jehoshaphat.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the steps in Achan's fall (Josh. vii. 21). "*I saw—I coveted—I took—behold they are hid.*" "*Seduction—enticement—consent—commission—completion*" (cf. James i. 14, 15).

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xiii. 12, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xix. 16.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Peter ii. 7, 8.

forming an alliance with the worldly, ungodly Ahab, and, in consequence, all but losing his life on the field of battle. See him again, forming an alliance with the king Ahaziah, "who did very wickedly;" and, in consequence, moving God Himself to destroy his ships. Listen to the Lord's rebuke to him by His seer: "Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

The Young  
Man,  
Woman.

*Look at that young man or that young woman.* They had put forth the blossoms of very fair promise at the season of confirmation. Once they were seen walking the high mountains of communion with God, and occupying a position of distinct separation from the world. But they formed an ungodly alliance; married into a worldly family; yoked themselves unequally with unbelievers; and to-day they are dwelling in the tents of Kedar; in the Vale of Siddim, with its fatal slim-pits; in the very midst of worldly Sodom. But they have lost their rest and peace; the devil rejoices—the world laughs—and the Holy Ghost is grieved.

Oh! remember, "Satan's opportunity is—a soul off its guard!"

"What haste a man must make," says Foster, "who would be beforehand with temptation!"

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2 Chron. xviii. 1-3; xx. 35-37; xix. 2.

"Watch and pray," said the blessed Master in Gethsemane, as He saw His path darkened by the tempter's power, "lest ye *enter into temptation*."<sup>1</sup> Watch—"Watch *unto prayer*."<sup>2</sup> "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."<sup>3</sup>

*Listen* to the following incident from the experience of a pastor:—

"A most interesting work of grace occurred in a stified convictions. Presbyterian church in this city. Many anxiously inquired what they should do to be saved. Among this number was a young lady who listened to the voice of truth and was troubled. Conscience spoke, and she felt the claims of God on her; but she could not now attend to the matters of her soul's salvation. One evening the meeting was more than usually interesting and solemn; the next evening a ball was to be held, and from this scene of solemnity she hurries away and joins in the giddy dance. By the sound of the violin and the voice of melody she tried to drown the admonitions of conscience; and for a little time she succeeded. Among the display of fashion, the glare of lights, and the intoxication of the scene, conscience slumbered, and suffered the gay transgressor to revel undisturbed in forbidden pleasure. But again she feels herself a sinner, and again she is at the meeting for conversation and

<sup>1</sup> S. Mark xiv. 38.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Peter iv. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Col. iv. 2.

prayer. Her heart is the seat of many painful emotions. The claims of truth and duty are urged. She *would* yield, she *would* follow the Saviour; but the theatre, the ball-room, her gay companions, how can she give up these? She was solicited to attend another ball. She went. Satan, as an angel of light, shed a deceptive radiance over the scene; she tried to be happy—tried to believe that her seriousness was melancholy, and that she had yet plenty of time to prepare for eternity. She returned to her dwelling; but she returned to die—to die without hope. '*I did not think,*' said she, '*that I should have to die so soon.*'

"One evening at the inquiry meeting, the next at the ball-room—gayest among the gay; a few nights more, and she is in her coffin. One week, with a heart light as air, she goes to a store to purchase trimmings for a ball dress; on the next week her friends go to the same store to purchase her shroud."

O! may God grant, that from that solemn death-scene a loud voice may come home to some who read these pages, and ring in trumpet tones through the deepest recesses of their slumbering consciences—"*Come out and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing.*"

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 17.

Be as wise, dear friend, as Diogenes, who, when Alexander asked him to request a favour, asked, as the only favour he needed, that the conqueror of the world should not stand between him and the sun, whose genial light and warmth he was enjoying. So, be determined that the world shall not hide the rays of peace and joy, which flow to you from the Presence of Jesus. Oh, be persuaded and have done with the world. "He who will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God."<sup>1</sup>

*But*, let me remind you, that if you *will* be a worldly Christian, God may see good to wean your heart and draw you into His Presence through the deep waters of much suffering and bitter trial. If the Lord had to send to burn up Sodom, ere Lot would take up his position of entire separation; if Absalom had to order his servants to set fire to Joab's barley-field, ere he would listen to the command to come into the presence of the king's son; if Richard Cecil had to cut the strings of his violin, and Hewitson to sell his prize medal, because they had become worldly snares,—*wonder* NOT, should the Lord see good to dash to pieces your golden bowls of worldly hopes and joys; and be constrained to wean you into His Presence by the sole process of much chastening.

Diogenes and  
his Royal  
Visitor.

Burning the  
Barley-field.

<sup>1</sup> James iv. 4.



2. And now, a word on THE GROUND OF SEPARATION. True separation from the world is accomplished by the blood of Jesus. It was when the Israelites were saved by the blood of the lamb that they were separated from Egypt—not before. So you must first know *the power of the blood of the Lamb of God upon your own conscience*, in order to be able to take up a position of *separation from the world*.

“He gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us”—(not, from the wrath to come only, but)—“from *this present evil world*, according to the will of God and our Father.”<sup>1</sup> “His name shall be called *Jesus*, because *He shall save His people from their sins*”<sup>2</sup>—from the dominion of their daily, hourly, besetting sins—from sin, the world, and the devil. Oh, “Love not the world, neither the things which are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him; for all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”<sup>3</sup> It is by the Cross that we are crucified to the world, and the

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. i. 21.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John ii. 15-17.

world to us ;<sup>1</sup> and by the Cross we become pilgrims and strangers,—“*dead with Christ,—buried with Christ,—risen with Christ,*”<sup>2</sup> to a new standing of life on the resurrection side of the grave, where we behold, with Israel of old, all our foes dead and buried beneath the waters of separation. Such is the path of separation from the old world to the new by the power of the Cross of Jesus. “Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world ; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”<sup>3</sup> This separation actually takes place the moment you look away to Jesus as your sin-bearer. In that look there is the death of the old nature—“then the old nature receives the death wound ; then we begin to die daily ;” then the heart is renewed, and the Holy Spirit draws the soul into union and fellowship with Jesus, and the promise at once becomes true, “My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.”

3. *Finally, strive to realize your new position as a child of God.* Christ reveals it in S. John xvii. 16 : “*They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.*” This is no attainment, but our present, new position of nonconformity to the world by virtue of our union with the crucified and risen Christ. The Israelites of old, standing in the heavenly places at

<sup>1</sup> Gal. vi. 14.<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rom. vi. 3-11.<sup>3</sup> 1 John v. 4.

Separation  
not an  
attainment.

Gilgal, occupying the divinely-prepared position of rest, plenty, victory, and progress in the land of blessing, and that only by death and resurrection (symbolised in the passage of Jordan), occupied at once a position of distinct separation from the old life of Egypt and reproach in the desert. And to the Levites, who had been chosen of God, and brought near by the sin-offering and burnt-offering, the Lord said, "Ye shall be holy unto me; for I the Lord am holy, and HAVE SEVERED you from other people, that ye should be mine."<sup>1</sup>

Strive, therefore, to live and walk worthy of your *new position in Christ*, as one severed, consecrated to Him for ever. Strive to follow the steps of Enoch, who "had this testimony, that he pleased God;"<sup>2</sup> yea more, follow the steps of the blessed Master Himself, who could say, "I always do those things that please Him."<sup>3</sup> Beware of descending for a moment from your high position—(IN Christ)—of nonconformity to the world, into the lower plains of worldliness, where pitfalls abound on all sides—pitfalls of drunkenness, profligacy, immorality, impurity, infidelity, carelessness, Christlessness.

O poor worldling! lying down to sleep on your own shadow, surrounded by glittering baubles, which

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xx. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xi. 5.

<sup>3</sup> John viii. 29.

will burst at a touch, "Awake! awake!" "come out and be separate;" flee to the Mount of Calvary; hide in the deep cleft of the Rock of Ages, lest thou be consumed.

*Depend daily, hourly, upon the grace of God the Holy Ghost, to cultivate within your soul a deeper spiritual life and a growing conformity to the will of God.* In every doubtful cross-way ask your soul the question: "*Come, my soul, be honest, WHAT WOULD JESUS DO? Art thou sure that my conduct in this matter will be pleasing to Him? Can I ask His blessing ere I take this step—go to this place—mingle in this company? Shall I be able to return to my Bible and my knees, after I have gone forth, with an unclouded, unsullied conscience?*" If so, all is well, but *if not, the world is there, it is sin.* "*Beware of being tinctured with the evil spirit of conformity to prevailing customs.*" *Ask the Holy Spirit to fill your heart brimful with the love of Jesus. Let that Divine, all-constraining love flood your heart, and it will be the overcoming power to destroy and expel the world from your soul.* "The soul is like a house of which strangers have taken possession, and lord it cruelly over the owner. What shall you do for your liberty? Can you change these strangers' hearts and make them other men, so that you would be content or even glad that

Expulsive  
Power.

they should remain? That is impossible. Pride will never be humble, lust will never be pure, selfishness will never think of a neighbour's interests, envy will never exult in a neighbour's joy. *The only thing to be done is to turn them out by bringing in others stronger than they, who will, little by little, get the mastery over them.*"<sup>1</sup> "Old inbred habits will make resistance; but by better habits they shall be entirely overcome."<sup>2</sup>

The beech-  
tree.

Take an illustration from the beech-tree. Through the months of winter and early spring it still carries the remnants of last year's foliage. There the leaves are, old, seared, copper-coloured; but they have not fallen like other leaves before the frost and gales of winter; with a wonderful tenacity they hold their own. But with the return of spring the sap springs afresh from the roots, and circulates in every tiny branch; the tree puts forth the powers of an awakened life—fresh buds burst forth, new leaves are unfolding daily, *now* the old, withered foliage is cast off and falls quickly to the ground. The power of a new life expels the old. *The moral* is not hard to find. Old habits will still maintain their hold on your heart and life, until the heart is filled with the power of the new life in Jesus. Let the transforming love of Christ take possession of

<sup>1</sup> Bishop of Rochester.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas à Kempis.

you. "Hide God's Word in your heart, that you may not sin."<sup>1</sup> Receive "Christ, your life,"<sup>2</sup> to the throne of the heart. "Drink in the atmosphere of heaven, and the world and the things that are in the world will lie vanquished at your feet." It is not the bird, that soars aloft into the blue heavens, which is caught in the carefully-laid snare, but the poor thing that grovels with soiled plumage among things of earth. The parable is this. Soar up and live up on high, so shall you escape the world's snares, and victory crown your ways. "THOUGH you have lien among the pots, YET shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."<sup>3</sup> A life soaring into upper world! A life ever catching the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness! A life of dazzling reflection!

Remember that it is your privilege, at each moment, under all circumstances, to say, "*Jesus saves me now.*" This was the happy experience of an aged, godly minister of Christ, and it may be yours. "Seek FIRST the kingdom of God."<sup>4</sup> Then sin and the world "shall not have dominion over you."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxix. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Col. iii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 13.

<sup>4</sup> S. Matt. vi. 33.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. vi. 14.

Ponder the world's maxims—

- "A little religion is all very well."
- "The world for health ; serious things for days of sickness."
- "Business first ; Christ afterwards."
- "It is impossible to be quite honest in trade."
- "If I be not worse than others, why should I fear ?"
- "Obey God when it is convenient ; when it is not, please yourself."

Ponder next the Christian's principles—

- "Religion is everything, or nothing."
- "God's work brooks no delay."
- "There is no little sin."
- "I must obey God, though I die for it."
- "A little with Christ is better than all the world without Him."

Finally, walk after this rule—

- "Say nothing you would not like God to hear."
- "Do nothing you would not like God to see."
- "Write nothing you would not like God to read."
- "Go to no place where you would not like God to find you."
- "Read no book of which you would not like God to say, 'Show it Me.'"
- "Never spend your time in such a way that you would not like God to say, 'What art thou doing ?'"

—From Rev. G. Everard's "*Day by Day*."

It is to those alone, who by grace have taken up this place IN *Christ* of distinct separation from the

world, that the Divine Presence is promised as an unfailing abiding place.

*"Let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him that was SEPARATED FROM HIS BRETHREN"* (Deut. xxxiii. 16).

"Fade, fade each earthly joy,  
Jesus is mine !  
Break every tender tie,  
Jesus is mine !  
Dark is the wilderness,  
Earth has no resting-place,  
Jesus alone can bless ;  
Jesus is mine !

Tempt not my soul away,  
Jesus is mine !  
Here would I ever stay,  
Jesus is mine !  
Perishing things of clay,  
Born but for one brief day,  
Pass from my heart away !  
Jesus is mine !

Farewell, ye dreams of night,  
Jesus is mine !  
Lost in this dawning light !  
Jesus is mine !  
All that my soul has tried  
Left but an aching void,  
Jesus has satisfied—  
Jesus is mine !



*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE.*

Farewell, mortality,

Jesus is mine !

Welcome, eternity,

Jesus is mine !

Welcome, O loved and blest !

Welcome, sweet scenes of rest !

Welcome, my Saviour's breast !

Jesus is mine !”

IV.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

CONDITIONAL ON

*A BRIGHT, WHOLE-HEARTED OBEDIENCE.*

"One life to live, one death to die,  
And then one long eternity!  
One life; oh, live that life to God!"

"He brought forth His people with joy, and His chosen with gladness; and gave them the lands of the heathen . . . *that they might observe His statutes, and keep His laws*" (Ps. cv. 44, 45).

"Observe to do according to all that is written. . . . *The Lord thy God is with thee.*" "So the Lord was with Joshua" (in path of obedience). . . . "Israel hath sinned . . . *neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you*" (Josh. i. 8, 9, vi. 27, vii. 11, 12).

"I dare not work my soul to save,  
That work the Lord has done;  
But I will work like any slave  
For love of God's dear Son."

—(Engraved in quaint letters on an old-fashioned tomb in a Somersetshire churchyard, near Bath, with the date 1657.)

"God's Will is delicious. He makes no mistakes."—F. R. H.

"Like those tropical regions whose 'unimpeded commerce with the sun clothes them with ever-new verdure, Mr. Hewitson seemed now, more than ever, to abide in the sunshine of God's face, and thus to abound with ever-new peace and joy.'—*Memoir.*

"'Tis they who keep most close to Him  
Who best can hear His guiding voice."

"*Never begin with obedience. You will never attain it! Begin with faith, and upon faith found this: 'He that loveth me, keepeth my commandments.'*"

"Justification by faith is the source of obedience and holiness of life."

"Beware of Antinomianism—a resting on the doctrines of grace, without watchfulness of the walk before God—all THAT religion is a fallacy."—*Mr. Harrington Evans, on his death-bed.*

"I LOVE the service of my God; like a bird, I fly at liberty on the wings of obedience to His holy will."—DR. CHALMERS.

"Beject the law as a way of life; love it as a rule of life."

"If you love Me, keep My commandments."

"The air only weighs heavily on such bodies as are void of air; so God's law, and so far God Himself, who reveals Himself by means of the law, rests like a heavy, oppressive burden on souls who have not God within them."—*Martensen.*

#### IV.

##### *HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

##### CONDITIONAL ON

##### *A BRIGHT, WHOLE-HEARTED OBEDIENCE.*

ALBERT DÜRER (as I have read somewhere) has left among his sketches a little outline picture of Christ, over which it is said he often sat and wept. It represented the *Risen Christ* all alone in a bare, barren, desert spot, surrounded by huge rocks and thorns and thistles, His face buried in His hands, as if weeping in disappointment; His head wears the crown of thorns; His hands and feet show the nail-marks of the Cross; and He seems to say—"Is it thus you requite My love? have I gained the victory over death and hell, and sin and Satan, in vain? Do you *care only to be delivered from the penalty of sin*, that you may be free to do your own pleasure and walk in your own way, and *refuse to rejoice that I have delivered you*

An object-lesson.

*from the power of sin, that you may walk in the light; and believe not that I have raised you to newness of life, that you may show forth the power of my resurrection, and walk henceforth the path of glad, whole-hearted obedience?"* Does not this picture speak home to many of our hearts?

The *Divine Presence* was promised to one who followed the Lord fully in the PATH OF DAILY OBEDIENCE.

Although I wish to be very brief on this point, I feel strongly that it is a point of the greatest possible importance. The Presence of Jesus is not promised to those, who, like Peter, follow "afar off." The promise in its fulness is for those, who—like Enoch and Moses, and Caleb and Joshua, and John and Mary—are willing to follow Him *wholly, FULLY*.

Three concentric circles.

In the memoir of the Rev. W. H. Hewitson, there is a striking passage, where the writer says, that "Dr. Payson has supposed the various classes of Christians to be ranged in *different concentric circles round Christ as their common centre*. Some value the presence of their Saviour so highly, that they cannot bear to be at any remove from Him. Even their work they will bring up, and do it in the light of His countenance, and, while engaged in it, will be seen constantly raising their eyes to Him, as if fearful of losing one beam of His light; *others*, who, to

be sure, would not be content to live out of His presence, are yet less wholly absorbed by it than these, and may be seen a little further off, engaged here and there in their various callings, their eyes generally upon their work, but often looking up for the light which they love. *A third class*, beyond these, but yet within the light-giving rays, includes a doubtful multitude, many of whom are so much engaged in their worldly schemes that they may be seen standing sideways to Christ, looking mostly the other way, and only now and then turning their faces towards the light. In the innermost circle Hewitson took his stand. 'From the time,' writes his earliest friend, 'that he was brought fully to see Christ as his "all in all," his soul was filled with His glory as a *present Saviour* and *ever-living Friend*: his communion with Him became more like that of one friend with another, who are personally near, than of a distant correspondence.' His holy ambition now was to 'follow the Lord fully.'"<sup>1</sup>

Dear friend, be it your holy ambition and mine to dwell in *the innermost concentric circle*, beneath the warm light of the Master's presence.

But the only path that leads into such close fellowship is that of *obedience*—glad, implicit obedience. The Christian that walks carelessly, uncircum-

<sup>1</sup> Num. xiv. 24.

spectly, soon finds himself "afar off" with Peter, in *the outermost circle*.

The very atmosphere of the innermost circle is that of bright, joyful obedience. "If ye love Me, keep My commandments."<sup>1</sup> "If ye keep *My commandments*, ye *shall abide in My love*" (i.e. in the innermost circle), "even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and *abide in His love*."<sup>2</sup>

"Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."<sup>3</sup> If He bid you go and speak to that man, do it. If He bid you take up your cross daily and follow Him, do it. If He bid you become a missionary in your home, or even bid you go forth to India or China to preach His gospel, do it. Does He bid you make a diligent use of all means of grace, public and private? *do it*. Does He bid you 'draw near with faith' to His table and "do this in remembrance of Me?" *do it*. "WHATSOEVER *He saith unto you*, DO IT." And yours shall be a place "*near unto Him*,"<sup>4</sup> within the innermost circle. And linked with *obedience* will come *power*. *The path of obedience is the path of power*, even as the path of disobedience is the path of weakness and failure. Yes! power with God and with man. "You shall know the

Obedience  
and Power.

<sup>1</sup> S. John xiv. 15.

<sup>2</sup> S. John xv. 10.

<sup>3</sup> S. John ii. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. cxlviii. 14.

exceeding greatness of His power to youward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power,"<sup>1</sup> for you shall live in His near presence, and receive from the fulness of Him, to whom "*all power is given* both in heaven and in earth;"<sup>2</sup> all power for suffering and for witnessing—subduing power, sanctifying power, overcoming power. "I will go in the strength of the Lord God. I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of thine only."<sup>3</sup> "Be strong and work, for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts."<sup>4</sup>

POWER must ever accompany obedience, because the path of obedience leads the child of God right into the presence of CHRIST THE ANOINTED ONE.

Under the typical dispensation, the *high priest* and *his sons* were partakers of the holy anointing oil (which is spoken of in the Word of God as *sevenfold* in its nature, holy, consecrating, enabling, healing, uniting, gladdening, fragrant oil). And this holy anointing oil—which was exclusively for the Lord's service—never poured on man's flesh (*i.e.* this Divine Anointing is not for the natural but spiritual man)—of a separating character—and of which no imitation was allowed<sup>5</sup>—was poured out on the head of the high priest,<sup>6</sup> and went down to the skirts of his clothing;<sup>7</sup> and when we bear

The Holy  
Anointing  
Oil.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. i. 19.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxi. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Haggai ii. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Ex. xxx. 30, 31.

<sup>6</sup> Lev. viii. 12.

<sup>7</sup> Ps. cxxxiii.



in mind that the twelve tribes were *represented* on the shoulders and breast-plate of the high priest, *the sacred oil could not descend without touching each tribe.*

What is this but *God's object lesson*, from which we are to learn that the spiritual Israel, in virtue of their vital union with Him, are partakers of this holy anointing oil, with which Christ, the Living Head, is anointed. And the words in 2 Cor. i. 21, and 1 John ii. 27, show that *ALL believers*, in virtue of this union, are partakers *in some measure* of this holy anointing.

But, alas! while very many Christians are content to live in the outmost circle, unconscious that the holy anointing oil of the Holy Spirit is their portion in Christ (and yet the term "*Christian*" is identically the same as "*anointed one*"), there are some, thanks be to God, who walk steadily in the sunny path of obedience, abide in the innermost circle, at the very skirts of the great High Priest, and so *participate in full measure*<sup>1</sup> in the ever-descending anointing of the Holy Spirit. Hence, theirs is a life full of freshness, unction, and power — power for service.

But do some Christians feel too weak, too timid, to be intrusted with Divine power? Do *you* feel that the power, which is the outcome of the holy

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Coloss. ii. 9, 10, R. V.

anointing, is too tremendous a gift to be delivered into your hands, that it may lead to presumption, pride, vainglory—to the temptation to turn the Lord's gift to your own selfish account, and finally to some grievous fall? In that case, go and lie at the Master's feet, and say, "Lord, I am too weak, too sinful, to be intrusted with Thy gift of power; take to Thyself the power, and dwell Thyself within my poor weak heart, and there exercise with Thine own hand Thy power *in me* and *through me* and *by me*, so that my power in the world may be, '*Christ in me*'—'*the power of God*.'"

Finally, *notice the order*—

- (1.) *Brought nigh by the blood—a place in Christ.* Seven steps.
- (2.) *The path of implicit obedience.*
- (3.) *A place in the innermost concentric circle of Christ's presence.*
- (4.) *Self laid low*, even in the dust, beneath the Master's feet, submerged and buried out of sight.
- (5.) *The anointing oil, the unction of the Holy Spirit, flowing forth.*
- (6.) *Love supreme: infecting, constraining the whole life, rebounding to God, to man.*<sup>1</sup> (O

<sup>1</sup> Love indwelling—at Home in God.—1 John iv. 8.

Love outflowing to a sinful world.—1 John iv. 9.

Love infecting—constraining the believer's heart.—1 John iv.

16; 2 Cor. v. 14.

Love rebounding to God.—1 John iv. 19.

Love rebounding to man.—1 John iv. 21.

God, make Thy people burning seraphs  
in Thy service, the fire of love ever burn-  
ing upon the altar of the heart.)

(7.) *Power over selfhood:*

„ *with God.*

„ *for service.*

Yea, do more than merely ponder the order. Look up for the enabling grace of the Holy Spirit, and in His almighty strength, without a moment's delay, let go the gloomy shore which is afar off from Christ; let go every chain of *selfhood* which binds you to the outermost circle. Yield yourself willingly, helplessly, to be borne along on the high-tide of Divine love, right into the innermost circle, to the very Master's feet, where *self* must die, the *oil of consecration* flow forth, and *All-consuming Love* adore.

“ *When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.*”<sup>1</sup>  
“ *I saw the Lord. . . . Woe is me! for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips . . . Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hands, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar; and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. . . . Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Here am I, Lord, send me.*”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rev. i. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. vi. 5-8.

V.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

TO BE ENJOYED BY THE CHRISTIAN

*IN DAILY LIFE.*

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE.*

Farewell, mortality,

Jesus is mine !

Welcome, eternity,

Jesus is mine !

Welcome, O loved and blest !

Welcome, sweet scenes of rest !

Welcome, my Saviour's breast !

Jesus is mine !"

IV.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

CONDITIONAL ON

*A BRIGHT, WHOLE-HEARTED OBEDIENCE.*

consciousness of the presence of Jesus. When Jesus first called you to Himself with the invitation, "*Come to Me*," that call meant, "*Come to Me to stay with Me*."

Rev. Andrew  
Murray.

"It was not," says the author of "*Abide in Christ*," "to refresh you for a few short hours after your conversion with the joy of His love and deliverance, and then to send you forth to wander in sadness and sin—no, indeed; He *had prepared* for you an *abiding dwelling with Himself*, where your *whole life* and *every moment* of it might be *spent*, where the *work of your daily life* might be *done*, and where all the while you might be enjoying unbroken communion with Himself. It was even this He meant when to that first word, '*Come to Me*,' He added this, '*Abide in Me*,' . . . . And, blessed be God, abiding in Jesus is not a work that needs, each moment, the mind to be engaged, or the affections to be directly or actively occupied with it. It is an intrusting of oneself to the keeping of the *Eternal Love*, in the faith that it will abide near us, and with its holy presence watch over us, and ward off the evil, even when we have to be most intently occupied with other things. And so the heart has rest and peace and joy in the consciousness of being kept when it cannot keep itself."

## THE PRESENCE OF JESUS IN DAILY LIFE. 59

"Amidst so many little ends and aims, which we must have while we are in the body, it is no easy work to shoot over, and in all things beyond, these, at the great end and aim of every work—*God Himself*. To rest in God without ever leaving *that home*, without ever venturing out of doors and away from under the roof of God's covenanting love—to have our hearts balanced *on God as their centre*, and so balanced that, under the ruder touches of temptation, they may be moved to and fro, like the nicely-poised stones of the Druids, but, like these stones, always return again to their rest, that is to be blessed indeed—to be blessed like the Psalmist, who said, after some rough onset of Satan, 'I shall not be greatly moved.' 'Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee; for Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.'"

Rev. W. H.  
Hewitson.

Let us now ponder *some of the fruits of daily, hourly* abiding in this sanctuary—HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE.

### I. MAINTENANCE OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE,

Every living thing depends for the maintenance of its life upon *its surroundings*.

Professor Drummond, in his book, "Natural Environment."

Professor  
Drummond  
on "En-  
vironment."



Law in the Spiritual World," in the chapter on "*Environment*" says, "Every living thing normally requires for its development an environment (*i.e.*, a surrounding) containing air, light, heat, and water. . . . The great function of environment is to *sustain* life. Alone, cut off from its surroundings, an organism is not. Alone, cut off from my surroundings, I am not—physically I am not. I am only as I am sustained. I continue only as I *receive*."

The tree, for instance, can only live as it lives in, draws from, holds a vital correspondence with its surroundings containing air, light, heat, and moisture. The fish and the bird can only live in their respective elements; withdraw them from their natural spheres, and their life is no longer maintained.

Where do you live?  
Everything depends upon the sphere in which you live—upon the atmosphere you breathe. If you choose—and every man is at liberty to choose his own surroundings—to live in and breathe, without intermission, an atmosphere impregnated with deadly disease, you must not be surprised if you sicken, droop beneath the virulence of the fell malady and die. Even so, if you choose to live in and look for the maintenance of life to any other surrounding than GOD HIMSELF, you must remain *ungodlike*. If, for instance, you make the world your environment, and hold vital correspondence

with its principles, habits, and associations, then your life is a life of the world, a life maintained by the world, a life in vital connection with a surrounding which is FULL OF DEATH. *There is but one environment from which true life may be derived, and by which it may be maintained.* THAT ENVIRONMENT IS GOD HIMSELF. The soul rests not and lives not, until it rests in and derives all life from this spiritual surrounding—HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE.

*"The cardinal error in the religious life is to attempt to live without an environment. . . . Faith is but an attitude, an empty hand for grasping an enviroing presence."*

Professor  
Drummond.

Now consider for a moment—Who would think of living without air, food, water? And yet how often we Christians forget, that we cannot live without a spiritual atmosphere, spiritual food and water! How often we forget the Master's words—"Apart from Me, ye can do nothing"!<sup>1</sup> How often we forget, that without *living, unbroken communion* with God it is impossible to maintain the new life in the soul!

Let us lay these thoughts to heart—

(1.) The *only dwelling-place* for the spiritual man is *His Enviroing Presence*; there the child of God lives, moves, and has his being—but only there.

<sup>1</sup> S. John xv. 5.

(2.) In His Environing Presence there is *fulness of supply for the maintenance of our spiritual life.*

(3.) The *only mean*, whereby we may continually draw from the reservoir of the fulness of blessing, is the *empty hand of faith.*

For the *maintenance*, therefore, of the spiritual life it is essential that we *dwell* habitually in the *secret place* of the Most High, and by a *sustained exercise of faith* draw from His fulness. "Of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."<sup>1</sup>

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so *walk ye in Him.*"<sup>2</sup>

"Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup>

"In Him *dwelleth all the fulness* of the Godhead *bodily.*"<sup>4</sup>

"And in Him ye are made full."<sup>5</sup>

But how is it, that very often the new life in the soul is not maintained in its fulness? How comes it, that "the king's sons are *lean every day*"? The fault cannot be with His *Surrounding Presence*, in which there is a constant fulness of supply; if there be a breakdown anywhere, it must be in ourselves, not in His *supply*, but in our *capacity* for *receiving*; it must be because there is a "*leakage*"

A leakage.

<sup>1</sup> S. John i. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Col. ii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Col. ii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John i. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Col. ii. 10 (R. V.)

somewhere. The Rev. E. Hopkins enforces this truth by the following illustration: An American lady, who was very fond of flowers, knowing that, if her garden was to be fertile, there must be a well in it, set to work to find a spring. At one spot feeling sure there was a spring there, she gave directions to search for it, but was answered, "If there were a spring we should see it." Digging, they found water, but there was no overflow, and the reason was at last found to be that there was an *under-drain*, which had been constructed by the first settlers there, and which carried the waters away along an underground channel. And it is because of some *under-drain*, some *leakage* in the spiritual life, argues Mr. Hopkins, that many Christians are so weak and defective. In the outside life all may appear well, but in the inner life of the soul there is a leakage which is sapping away the spiritual life. And not until the child of God is willing to have the *cause* discovered, and the leakage stopped by the entire surrender of the *evil*, whatever it may be, and the whole life—body, soul, and spirit—consecrated to Him, will the garden of the soul become fruitful. "Thou shalt be like a watered garden; and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lviii. 2.

God, make Thy people burning seraphs  
in Thy service, the fire of love ever burning  
upon the altar of the heart.)

(7.) *Power over selfhood :*

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Yea, do more than merely ponder the order. Look up for the enabling grace of the Holy Spirit, and in His almighty strength, without a moment's delay, let go the gloomy shore which is afar off from Christ; let go every chain of *selfhood* which binds you to the outermost circle. Yield yourself willingly, helplessly, to be borne along on the high-tide of Divine love, right into the innermost circle, to the very Master's feet, where *self* must die, the oil of consecration flow forth, and *All-consuming Love* adore.

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. i. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. vi. 5-8.

V.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

TO BE ENJOYED BY THE CHRISTIAN

*IN DAILY LIFE.*

at His feet—time to be “changed into His image,”<sup>1</sup> time to be “strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man,”<sup>2</sup> to “know the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe.”<sup>3</sup> *Then*, just as Moses descended from the calm atmosphere of the Lord’s own presence with a soul wet with the dews of heaven, strong and bold, and burning with zeal to war against sin in the camp of Israel, you will come down “full of power by the Spirit of the Lord,”<sup>4</sup> to witness in the world, realising that “Jehovah is your *strength* and song,”<sup>5</sup> that “in Jehovah you have righteousness and *strength*,”<sup>6</sup> and that you “can do all things *IN*” (in virtue of your union with) “Christ who *strengthens* you.”<sup>7</sup>

*Then* it will become possible for you to stand firm in your home and business—behind the counter, in the workshop, in the workroom—amid the fiery darts of your companions, and the scoffing jeers of your fellow-apprentices. Yes! thanks be to God, firm as a rock amid the billows of worldliness, temptation, and sin. *Then* with a heart brimful of love and joy, you will go to your class in the Sunday-school, your district in the week, yea, even into the dens and haunts of vice which abound in our great

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.<sup>2</sup> Eph. iii. 16.<sup>3</sup> Eph. i. 19.<sup>4</sup> Micah iii. 8.<sup>5</sup> Isa. xii. 2.<sup>6</sup> Isa. xlv. 24.<sup>7</sup> Phil. iv. 13.

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cities, to carry the light of God's Word—the gospel concerning a *Crucified and Risen, Present, Personal Saviour*—to many a poor shipwrecked one, struggling amid the billows of sin without any life-buoy or anchor for his soul.

“ Are you shining for Jesus, dear ones,  
Shining just everywhere,  
Not only in easy places,  
Not only just here and there ?  
Shining in happy gatherings,  
Where all are loved and known ?  
Shining where all are strangers—  
Shining when quite alone ;  
Shining at home, and making  
True sunshine all around !  
Shining at school, and faithful—  
Perhaps among faithless—found ?

Shining because you are walking  
In the *Sun's* unclouded rays,  
And you cannot help reflecting  
The light on which you gaze !  
Shining because it shineth  
So warm and bright above,  
That you *must* let out the gladness,  
And you *must* show forth the love.”

—F. R. HAVERGAL.

A third fruit of abiding in the secret-place of  
His Personal Presence is—



## 3. DAILY VICTORY.

Let me refer you to Psalm xci. The first verse tells of your abiding-place—"He that dwelleth in the secret-place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Such is your new position which you now occupy in virtue of your union with Jesus, and, blessed fact! in that secret-place, under that shadow, is revealed His *presence*.

The second and following verses tell of the *fruits of that abiding* in the Master's presence—"He shall deliver thee. . . . He shall cover thee. . . . His truth shall be Thy shield and buckler. . . . thou shalt not be afraid. . . . there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. . . . He shall give His angels charge to keep thee. . . . Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder. . . . I will deliver him. . . . I will set him on high. . . . I will answer him. . . . I will be with him in trouble. . . . I will honour him. . . . I will satisfy him, . . . and I will show him My salvation."

What a life of victory! Truly an overcoming life is revealed to us in these verses. But, remember this blest life is promised to those only, *who have taken up their place in the secret place—beneath the shadow of the Presence of Jesus, the Overcomer*. But how often the experience of the child of

God is not victory through the habitual and joyful appropriation of His sustaining grace, but failure, constant failure, arising very often from self-will, from an unwillingness to be led and held in Christ's hand.

I love to tell the story of a little girl.

It was winter; the ground was frozen hard, and the pathways were slippery with ice. Away ran a merry little girl with hands thrust into a cosy muff; presently she came upon a piece of ice, made all the more slippery by the passing of many feet, and, like a brave little woman, she must imitate the lads and slide; but her little feet soon parted company and she rolled on the ground. A gentleman, coming up at the time, said to her with kindly voice, "Give me your hand, my child, and I will steady you while you run." But the proud little heart said, "No thank you, sir, I am quite able to take care of myself." Again she ran off upon another dangerous place, and again she fell, and again the kind hand was offered and again refused. And a third time the merry, laughing child braved the slippery path; but this time her feet shot away suddenly, and she fell heavily on the hard, frozen road. In a moment her kind friend was by her side, and with a crestfallen look she turned to the gentleman and said, "How silly I have been! I think you had

A Slippery Path.

better hold my hand, then I am sure I shall not fall." She placed her hand in his; it was tightly grasped, and with a light, merry heart she slid along once more.

This is a picture—*Ourselves!* Leaning on the brittle, bruised reed of self-will, self-reliance, *self-hood*, in one form or another, we have gone forth to the world's slippery places and met with many a fall; and our life to-day is marred by failure, falls, defeat. Oftentimes has the Strong and Faithful One come and offered His upholding hand; and yet, the proffered guidance and strength have as often been refused. But, marvellous love! at this fresh crisis in your life's history He comes and stands again at your side, with His gentle, tender eye—"the soul's soundless speech"—gazing down in deep, yearning compassion upon His redeemed one, lying torn and bleeding by the world's cruel thorns, and bruised by her falls. He looks! He speaks! "Let Me hold thy hand. See My strong hand stretched out to save and uphold; fear not, only place thy weak hand in Mine, and all will be well."

Grasp the  
proffered  
Hand.

Oh, then, grasp that Hand of Love! Breathe forth the prayer, "I am Thine, save me."<sup>1</sup> "*Hold* Thou me up, and I shall be safe;"<sup>2</sup> "*Uphold* me,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxix. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxix. 117.

according to Thy Word.”<sup>1</sup> Listen to His gracious promise—“Though you fall, you shall not be utterly cast down, for the *Lord upholdeth* you with His hand.”<sup>2</sup> “Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am Thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will *uphold* thee with the right hand of My righteousness.”<sup>3</sup> So it shall be your privilege to “Come up out of the wilderness *leaning* upon the Beloved;”<sup>4</sup> and in the darkest night of sorrow, suffering, weakness, or weariness; and when most liable to stumble and fall on the world’s slippery plains, it will still be your privilege to hear the sweet music of your Shepherd’s voice—

*“Child of My love, lean hard;  
If you love Me, lean hard.”*

“LEANING UPON THE BELOVED.”

“I know not the way I am going,  
But well do I know my Guide.  
With a childlike trust I give my hand  
To the Mighty Friend at my side;  
And the only thing I say to Him,  
As He takes it, is, ‘*Hold it fast*;  
Suffer me not to lose my way,  
And lead me home at last.’”

A fourth fruit of abiding habitually in His Presence will be—

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxix. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xli. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 24.

<sup>4</sup> Song of Solomon, viii. 5.

#### 4. A GROWING CONFORMITY TO HIS GLORIOUS IMAGE.

"But we all, with face unveiled, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are (being) changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

Here let me say, again, God has given us, *in Christ, first, the place of a child*: "Ye are all the sons of God *by faith in Christ Jesus*"<sup>2</sup> *then the heart of a child*: "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."<sup>3</sup> And the Holy Spirit, working by the law of assimilation, makes us like unto Him to whom we cling, and whose children we are.

*In Christ, the Righteous One*, we become righteous, for "man has sinned, but God has suffered. God has become the sin of man, and man has become the righteousness of God."<sup>4</sup>

And *in Christ, the Holy One*, it is God's will and purpose that we should become holy: "in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,"<sup>5</sup> and "out of His fulness we are to receive" (moment by moment) "grace for grace."<sup>6</sup>

Dr. Goodwin. "Be sure of this, before God ever communicates any good to a soul, he places that soul

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 2 Cor. v. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. iii. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Col. ii. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Gal. iv. 6.

<sup>6</sup> S. John, i. 16.

in a place of holiness to receive it." Yes, even *IN Christ*, the Holy One of God—in *Him* you are "made partaker of the Divine nature;"<sup>1</sup> in *Him* you are "not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of your mind;"<sup>2</sup> in *Him* you are made a recipient of the Spirit of holiness, in *Him* you are "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places."<sup>3</sup> Look not therefore *within* for sanctification. Within, in your flesh, there is nothing but the *presence*, the *perpetual presence of sin*—I say, *the presence—not* (through grace) *its ruling power*.<sup>4</sup>

Look for sanctification from Christ. He is as much our "sanctification" as He is our "righteousness."<sup>5</sup> "Your evidences, your comfort, your hope do not spring from your fruitfulness, or self-crucifixion, or anything within you; but solely and entirely from the Lord Jesus Christ," in whom you abide. Dwell much in the light of His countenance, throw open the windows and doors of your soul, and let the warm, cheering light of His love and grace flow in, and sin and the world will die; while the sweet graces of the Spirit, the fruits of holiness, will develop, just as the flowers and fruits in your garden expand and ripen beneath the warm

<sup>1</sup> 2 Peter i. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. i. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Rom. vi. 14; viii. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Cor. i. 30.

heat of the summer's sun. The Holy Spirit will take of the things of Jesus and reveal them unto you; so shall you be "filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."<sup>1</sup>

The Fragrant Life.

There is a pretty little Persian allegory to this effect: A man took up something very sweet in his hand, and said, "What are you? are you a bit of musk?" "No, I am only a bit of clay; but I have been lying near a sweet rose, and the sweet rose has given its scent to me." Only sit beneath the shadow of Jesus, the Rose of Sharon, and let His fragrance be imparted to you; drink in the sweet influences of His grace and love, and your "root will be spread out by the waters, the dew will lie all night upon your branch, your glory will be fresh in you, and your bow will be renewed in your hand."<sup>2</sup> Yours will be a *fragrant life*, a "*savour of life unto life*." The world will take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus. Yes, with "*Jesus*" (to quote a beautiful passage from Professor Wace), "who in all His gentleness, all His wisdom, all His power, is *perpetually at your side*, desiring to hear us, to guide us, to control us, to save us. *Who would willingly forego the perpetual presence of a perfect Friend? Above all things, who would forego it, for time and eternity, if that*

A Perfect Friend.  
A Perfect Saviour.

<sup>1</sup> Phil. i. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Job xxix. 19, 20.

*Friend be a perfect Saviour?* It would surely check many a crude speculation and many a rash neglect of the claims of our faith, if men bore in mind more clearly this simple and cardinal element in it. It is not simply a truth, more or less, which is abandoned by unbelief, but a *Person, a Living and a Present Saviour.*"

So, for *daily witnessing, daily victory, daily soul-growth*, as well as for *daily guidance and daily protection*, the promise is sure—"My presence shall go with thee, and I will *give thee rest.*"

BLESSED IS THE PEOPLE THAT KNOW THE JOYFUL SOUND: THEY WILL WALK, O LORD, IN THE LIGHT OF THY COUNTENANCE" (Ps. lxxxix. 15).

"Walking with Thee, my God,  
Saviour benign,  
Daily confer on me  
Converse divine;  
Jesus, in Thee restored,  
Brother and blessed Lord,  
Let it be mine.

Walking with Thee, my God,  
Like as a child  
Leans on his father's strength,  
Crossing the wild:  
And by the way is taught  
Lessons of holy thought,  
Faith undefiled.



*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE.*

Darkness and earthly mists,  
How do they flee,  
Far underneath my feet,  
Walking with Thee ;  
Pure is that upper air,  
Clondless the prospect there,  
Walking with Thee.

Walking in reverence  
Humbly with Thee,  
Yet from all abject fear  
Lovingly free ;  
E'en as a friend with friend,  
Cheered to the journey's end,  
Walking with Thee."

VI.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*  
*ONWARD FOR EVER.*

"Lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the age" (S. Matt. xxviii.)

"Oh! if we could but remember that our Master's eye is never off us; that He saw His disciples toiling in their ships, though they knew it not."  
—L.A.B., *Memorials of a Quiet Life*.

"He alone never loseth what is dear to him, to whom all things are dear in Him, who is never lost."—S. AUGUSTINE.

"And when that happy time shall come of endless peace and rest,  
We shall look back upon our path, and say,  
It was the best."

"There is a great want about all Christians who have not suffered. Some flowers must be broken or bruised before they emit any fragrance. . . . A dark hour makes Jesus bright. . . . To me there is something sacred and sweet in all suffering; it is so much akin to the Man of sorrows. . . . As the sky darkens around you, *hide deeper in the Cleft Rock*."—M'CHEYNE.

"Ah, if you knew what peace there is in an accepted sorrow."—MADAME GUYON.

"Through one short night may sorrow last,  
But joy with morning's dawn will rise."

"The Pilgrim they laid in a chamber whose window opened towards the sun-rising; the name of the chamber was *Peace*, where he slept till break of day."—*Pilgrim's Progress*.

"Gently the passing spirit fled,  
Sustained by grace Divine;  
Oh may that grace on all be shed,  
To make their end like thine."

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (Ps. cxvi. 15).

VI.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE  
ONWARD FOR EVER.*

IN TRIAL—IN SUFFERING—IN BEREAVEMENT—IN  
DEATH—IN HEAVEN.

"I FEEL as if Jesus had died only yesterday," said Luther, so present to his mind was the blessed fact of the death of Immanuel for him; such a present ground for confidence, such present consolation did it afford him.

Would you, dear friend, inherit a great blessing? The Reality of Jesus Christ.  
Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you the *reality* of Jesus Christ—the *reality* of His death, and forgiveness through that death—the *reality* of His *finished work for you* on the Cross—the *reality* of His *unfinished work for you now in heaven*—the *reality* of His *Spiritual Presence with you now*—and *for ever*.  
Oh for grace to be enabled to "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which

are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”<sup>1</sup>

The child of God has the Divine Presence through life : amid irksome duties, through dull, uneventful days, when thick mists and chilly fogs veil the landscape of the soul, He is still near, though faith’s eye sees Him not.

General  
Gordon.

1. *In heavy trials.*—The rainbow’s blended hues shine out upon the inky-black thunder-clouds ; so amid the dark, heavy trials and sorrows of life, the child of God has the sweet consciousness of the Presence of Christ. Think of that noble Christian soldier, General Gordon, locked up in Khartoum. Let me recall his words to his sister—“I am left, but not alone, for I have great confidence in my Saviour’s presence.” And again, “I now take my worries more quietly ; all things are ruled by Him for His glory, and it is rebellion to murmur against His will. I must stay myself on the fact that not one sparrow falls to the ground without our Lord’s permission, and that God provideth the strength sufficient for the day.” Thank God for such Christian soldiers.

Madame  
Guyon.

And when Madame Guyon was passing her time in solitude for Christ’s sake, cut off from all she

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 18.

loved, it was the conscious Presence of Jesus that filled her soul with joy. Listen to her words—

“Could I be cast where Christ is not,  
That were indeed a dreadful lot ;  
But regions none remote I call,  
Secure of finding *Christ in all.*”

And you may remember the words of a little child, *Is God dead?* who saw her mother, a poor widow, in deep distress. After gazing in wonder for some time, the little one threw her arms round her mother's neck and asked, in trembling surprise, “*Mother, is God dead?*” Thanks be to God, there is the greatest consolation, in the dark hour of trial, in the thought *that Jesus is no longer dead—that “He ever liveth.”*<sup>1</sup> “Behold, I am *alive* for ever more.”<sup>2</sup> Was not this the Psalmist's experience when he said, “*The Lord sitteth upon the water-flood ; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever*”?<sup>3</sup> The eye of faith, looking up above the water-floods of trial, confusion, lawlessness, and infidelity, rests on the “*throne set in heaven*”—fixed, immoveable, eternal—and upon a *Living, Ruling King* set upon the throne, and at once every fear is hushed, every wave of unbelief is stilled, the heart is calmed—all is well.

Or again, when he said, “Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts ; all Thy waves” “Yet the Lord.”

<sup>1</sup> Heb. vii. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. i. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xxix. 10, 11.

and Thy billows are gone over me. *Yet the Lord will command His loving-kindness* in the day-time, and in the night His song shall be with me, and my prayer unto *the God of my life.*"<sup>1</sup> Oh, how his soul thirsts, when tossed about like a helpless plaything upon the billows of trial, for *God*, for the *living God*.

Or, to turn to another psalm, Ps. xcvi.

Amidst the dark surroundings of the inspired writer's life, how full of consolation is verse 11—

Light sown.

"Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."

Ponder it! "Sown"—sown like some precious seed from the heavenly granary—sown from your heavenly Father's hand into the furrow of the very darkened path which you are destined to tread; and, when most needed and least expected, it may be, it will spring up at your very feet, for—"Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness,"<sup>2</sup> even the light of His Presence. "In Thy light shall we see light."<sup>3</sup>

Isaiah  
calmed.

Look at the young Prophet Isaiah.

His lot is cast in times of great depression.

The Assyrian is sharpening his weapons, and contemplating a deadly swoop upon the defenceless kingdom of Judah. The tidal wave of unbelief,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xlii. 2, 7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxli. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xxxvi. 9.

the darkest form of unbelief, is breaking over the land.

The good King Uzziah, who had lived so long and so well, has been taken away from the evil to come.

The young prophet is left alone, and needs consolation. "Wine is for them that are heavy of heart." He required it, and it was not withheld. The vision is given, and his spirit is *calmed*.<sup>1</sup> He beholds,—and, far above the dark clouds of the lower world, sits the Living One,—the King Eternal,—Immortal,—abiding King for ever. The Glorious Vision told him, that earth should never want its ruler, Judah never be without its God, the saint never without his unfailing Friend.

Look at S. John, like some chained eagle, a S. John calmed. prisoner in Patmos.<sup>2</sup>

The outlook on all sides was of the darkest possible nature. "The bright day of the Augustan age was long passed; the very air of Rome smelt of blood; murder and suicide were the fashion of the day; the Roman empire was tottering to its very base;" storms of tribulation had begun to burst forth, fires of martyrdom were already kindled.

Within the Church were grave perplexities.

Such was the dark outlook, which the exiled

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Isa. vi.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. iv.



Apostle had to contemplate from the lone rock in the Ægean Sea.

Behold him ! lingering there, exiled, forlorn, unbefriended—storms of persecution breaking around his unsheltered head—gazing wistfully across the dark waters, scanning the darkening horizon, weeping for the Church in her depression and discouragements, *when*, to his great consolation,—“ Behold a door is opened in heaven,”<sup>1</sup> and “ Behold, a throne *set* in heaven, and ONE SAT on the throne.”<sup>2</sup> What great consolation that vision must have brought the aged exile ! The whole face of the earth was darkened by clouds of rebellion, confusion, anarchy, lawlessness ; while, far up above the seething elements of all disorder, *a throne was SET*, fixed, immoveable, eternal. Thrones of earth may totter and fall ; the throne in heaven was set. *And One sat on the throne* ; there was a *King holding* the reins of government, ruling aright—a *Hand to guide* and uphold—a *living Head*, warm to love, to feel, to cheer. The exile gazes upon the vision, and at once his troubled spirit is hushed, his tears are dried, his heart is calmed, every wave of doubt and fear is stilled, all is well. Nothing less than this will suffice in dark hours, amidst billows of trial and crushing bereavement. If, in such seasons, we can close

<sup>1</sup> Rev. iv. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. iv. 2.

the eye of faith to self and circumstances, and fix it on the throne *set* in heaven, and on the *Living, Saving, Feeling One* set upon the throne, it shall indeed be well—

*We shall "endure as seeing Him who is invisible."*<sup>1</sup>

2. *In the Dark Night of Suffering.*—Dear suffering friend, how blessed to be able to assure you of the abiding Presence of Jesus. Just think! "Himself" (yes, *Jesus Himself!*) "took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."<sup>2</sup> Himself! the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." For your consolation, you may think of the *death-sufferings* and the *life sorrows and sufferings* of the Lord Jesus. How He suffered for righteousness' sake; suffered in the way of sympathy; suffered by way of anticipation; how the very thought of the Garden of Gethsemane, with its cup of agony, and the vision of the Cross ever falling athwart His path, must have filled Him with great sorrow. Listen to His own words, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"<sup>3</sup>

Consider  
Him who  
endured.

But in the dark night of suffering, when wearying, protracted pain is furrowing the face and blanching the lips, when the flesh sighs and cries "in the morning, Would God it were evening, and in the

Tell me that  
*Jesus Lives.*

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi. 27.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. viii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> S. Luke xii. 50.

evening, Would God it were morning ;” when the wheels of the Master’s chariot seem to tarry, and the taper of hope is burning sometimes low into the socket, “*then tell me,*” cries the Christian sufferer, “tell me again that *Jesus lives*—that I have to do with a *living, faithful Friend and Consoler* ;—that *His Presence* sheds a fair light into my sick chamber ;—that ‘underneath are the *Everlasting Arms*,’<sup>1</sup> tell me this, and I am strengthened and consoled ; tell me this, and my ‘sorrow is turned into joy.’ ”<sup>2</sup> Oh, then, be of good cheer, thy prayer is fully answered ; lift up thy head, and brush away the crystal tear-drops ; thou art not alone in the dark vale of suffering ; there stands at thy very side *A Living One*, who is a “Friend who loves at all times, a near Kinsman, a Brother born for adversity,”<sup>3</sup> a tender, sympathising “*High Priest*, touched with all the feeling of your infirmities.”<sup>4</sup> A Living One, whose footprints are traceable along your path of trial and suffering. “Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.”<sup>5</sup> Dark, dark may be your night, most anxiously may you be waiting for the first streak of dawn, but take this cup of consolation, it was in the fourth watch of the night, surrounded by thick darkness,—dark clouds

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 27.      <sup>2</sup> John xvi. 20.      <sup>3</sup> Prov. xvii. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. iv. 15.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Peter ii. 21.

above, darker billows beneath,—that Jesus, the Living Friend, came walking upon the waves, whispering the gracious undertone of love, “It *is* I, be not afraid.” “It *was* I, that roused the storm ; it *is* I, who, when it has done its work, will hush it into a calm, and say ‘Peace, be still.’” It *was* I, that cast my costly jewel into the fiery crucible. It *is* I, who sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, holding my tried ones in my hand, permitting the flames to kindle only in measure, in exact measure to the “needs be” for this fiery trial ; it is I, who, when the suffering has done its work, “will bring them through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried ; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them ; I will say it is my people ; and they shall say, the Lord is my God.”<sup>1</sup> Yes, though the clear light may sometimes shine through “weeping clouds,” *the Presence of Jesus is a blessed reality* in the hushed chamber of sickness and suffering.

“In the Black Forest in Germany a baron built a castle with two lofty towers. From one tower to the other he stretched several wires, which in calm weather were motionless and silent. When the wind began to blow, the wires began to play like an Æolian harp in the window. As the wind rose

*Songs in the Night.*

<sup>1</sup> Zech. xiii. 9.

into a fierce gale, the old Baron sat in his castle and heard his mighty hurricane-harp playing grandly over the battlements. So, while the weather is calm and the skies clear, a great many emotions of a Christian's heart are silent. As soon as the wind of adversity smites the chords, the heart begins to play, and when God sends a hurricane of terrible trial you will hear strains of submission and faith, and even of sublime confidence and holy exultation, which could never have been heard in the calm hours of prosperity."—*Dr. Cuyler, "God's Light on Dark Clouds."*

In the darkest night—amid midnight gloom—of sorrow and suffering, we hear the lofty praises ascending and reaching the throne of God from the lips of His tried ones "passing through the valley of Baca." Job and David had "songs in the night." They could praise the Lord *all the day*. Oh! praise Him, praise Him, and "forget not all His benefits;" take down the silent, muffled harp, tune its strings to the high praises of Immanuel. *Praise Him all the day*. *Praise Him* early in the morning, on the threshold of the day's many duties and trials. *Praise Him* beneath the blinding glare of life's mid-day sun. *Praise Him* beneath the twilight shadows, under the midnight sky, when not one bright star of promise shines out amid the rifted

clouds. *Praise Him, "who giveth songs in the night."*<sup>1</sup>

"HOPE THOU IN GOD; FOR I SHALL YET PRAISE HIM, WHO IS THE HEALTH OF MY COUNTENANCE, AND MY GOD."<sup>2</sup>

"WHOSO OFFERETH PRAISE GLORIFIETH ME."<sup>3</sup>

"Who shall celebrate the name of God by night?

Whilst we are sleeping, those to whom the King  
Has measured out a cup of sorrow, sweet  
With His dear love, yet very hard to drink,  
Are waking in His Temple, and the eyes  
That cannot sleep for sorrow or for pain  
Are lifted up to heaven; and *sweet low songs*,  
Broken by patient tears, *arise to God.*"

But if the promise, "My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest," becomes the very anchor of hope amid scenes of sickness and suffering, there is yet a darker night, when the *Presence of the Living Christ* is more needed still. I mean—

3. *The Darker Night of Bereavement*, when life, which was once so sunny, and the world, which was once so sweet, have become beclouded and embittered, and draped with winter's gloom; when you are left to travel life's journey alone;—your sheltering gourd

<sup>1</sup> Job xxxv. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xlii. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. l. 23.

withered, your golden bowl of life's pleasures lying shattered at your feet ;—*when* not one star of hope or promise is seen to shine out for you amid darkened midnight sky ; *when* you walk alone the gloomy valley of life, where you search in vain for a well of comfort ; *when* you are allured into the wilderness, where no clusters of the grapes of Eshcol offer refreshment, and no voice speaks comfortably ; *when* the sunbeam has gone from your once happy home, the child from your heart ; *when* the King Himself has gone down into His garden, and in tender love gathered one of His choicest lilies, and hidden it safely in His bosom ; *when* you stand in the chamber of death, or by the brink of the grave (where the pale, sickly lamps of nature, philosophy, and science refuse to burn ; where the world trembles and retires ; where cold infidelity fails to give one ray of hope), *when* you are called to bury in the dark tomb all that now remains of what was dearer than life to you ; *when* you have returned to your rifled home, with its awful, oppressive, crushing silence ; **WHEN** the one terrible thought is weighing heavily on your sorrow-stricken spirit,—that henceforth “ nothing can reanimate thy still marble, or refill the vacant niche in thy heart of hearts ; ”—that henceforth your path must in a measure be desolate and alone,—without one glimpse, —without one grasp of the hand,—without the

exchange of one word with your loved and best,—  
THEN, dear bereaved one (for I would try to comfort  
with the same comfort wherewith I myself have  
been comforted by God), THEN *you will need* the  
assurance of the *Presence of Jesus*. Oh! then, re-  
member IT IS HE whose “voice has broken, with  
its silvery accents, the muffled stillness of the death  
chamber, ‘I will not leave you comfortless; *I will  
come to you.*’”<sup>1</sup> It is He—the *Resurrection* and the  
*Life*—who stands with His arms of everlasting love  
around you at the brink of the grave, and reveals  
death vanquished and the grave spoiled, and speaks  
with authority—“If a man keep My saying, he shall  
never see death.”<sup>2</sup> It is His own presence that “not  
only irradiates the valley of the shadow of death, but  
throws a radiance into the world beyond, and reveals  
it peopled with the sainted spirits of those who have  
died in Him.” It is *Jesus Himself*, who would hence-  
forth abide as *guest* in your desolate heart and rifled  
home. Oh, what sweet comfort for the mourner!  
The overshadowing Presence of Jesus, who would  
allure, and bring you into the wilderness, and speak  
comfortably unto you, and give you vineyards from  
thence, and the *valley of Achor for a door of hope*;  
that you may sing there as in the days of youth.<sup>3</sup>  
Therefore let His light shine into your soul even

<sup>1</sup> John xiv. 18.<sup>2</sup> John viii. 51.<sup>3</sup> Hosea ii. 14, 15.



through your tears—"What you know not now, you shall know hereafter."<sup>1</sup> "Now we see through a glass darkly; then face to face. Now we know in part; then shall we know even as also we are known."<sup>2</sup> Enough, that *Jesus lives* and says—"My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." "*I will be with him in trouble.*"<sup>3</sup>

4. *In the Solemn Hour of Death.*—Ere this year has passed away you may be lying on your dying bed, your precious, immortal soul tarrying but for a little while on the very borderland of the eternal world, with death creeping on apace. *You will then want a plank, a lifeboat, an ark of safety, a firm Rock to rest upon. You will then need the Holy Spirit to testify to your soul of the blood of Jesus, —in whom there is redemption, even the forgiveness of sins,—to witness to His Godhead, to unfold His exceeding love and faithfulness, to witness to you that Jesus lives and is present.* So shall you be enabled to shout "Victory! victory!" as you pass safely and triumphantly over Jordan.

(1.) *Some, indeed, have ventured to brave death, the grave, and eternity, with only the rush-light of nature and reason, with only the dim taper-light of a respectable, moral, self-righteous life. Alas! these were but false lights in the face of grim death*

<sup>1</sup> S. John xiii. 7.<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 12.<sup>3</sup> Ps. xci. 15.

and the hopeless grave. They were quenched in utter darkness. "The light of the wicked shall be put out. The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him."<sup>1</sup> "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourself about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, *Ye shall lie down in sorrow.*"<sup>2</sup>

Oh, what sorrows, what remorse, what lashing of Two Dying Infidels. the conscience surround the dying moments of the Christless soul! Listen to the last words of Tom

Paine, (1.) Tom Paine. "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"<sup>3</sup> Stand at the side of the dying Voltaire, (2.) Voltaire.

whose nurse vowed that she would never again venture to soothe the pillow of a dying infidel, so awful was the death of that Christless soul. I have stood myself at the bedside of a dying man, who had long "trodden under foot the Son of God, and had counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and had done despite unto the Spirit of grace." It was a sad, sad sight, a sight I shall never forget—the terrible fear of death, the cry for mercy from a heart which seemed as cold as stone, the sorrow of the world which worketh death, the fearful looking-for of judgment, the bitter remorse, "Oh, I wish I were

<sup>1</sup> Job xviii. 5, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. l. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xxii. 1.

as happy as you are!" the demon of blank despair mounted on his brow; the hollow, sunken eye gazing wildly into a dark, hopeless eternity! I have thought of that scene, and remembered the words of God,<sup>1</sup> "THEY HAVE NOT CRIED UNTO ME WITH THEIR HEART, WHEN THEY HOWLED UPON THEIR BEDS."

DYING TESTIMONIES.

(2.) But I turn away from such sad, sad scenes.

S. Paul.

And I love to gaze upon the great cloud of witnesses, cloud above cloud of faithful ones, who have lived and died in Jesus. There is St. Paul. But what was his ground of confidence in death? "*I know HIM whom I have believed.*"<sup>2</sup> The Presence of his

Polycarp.

personal Saviour. And there is Polycarp, whose grand answer to the Roman magistrate, who had said to him, "Curse Christ, and I will set you free," was this, "*Eighty-and-six years have I served Christ, and He has never done me wrong; how then can I curse Him, my King and my Saviour?*" And the noble confessor of Jesus died, bound to the martyr's stake. There are our brave Reformers—Thomas Bilney, John Rogers, John Hooper, Rowland Taylor, Hugh Latimer, John Bradford, Nicholas Ridley, Archbishop Cranmer, and a host of others—all of whom died at the burning stake because they *resisted even unto death the Romish doctrine of the Real*

Our Reformers.

<sup>1</sup> Hosea vii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. i. 12.

BODILY PRESENCE, *under the form of the consecrated bread and wine in the Lord's Supper.*<sup>1</sup>

But what power enabled them to play the man amid the flames, so that *one* even kissed the faggot and stake, and, as Fuller says, "embraced the flames as a fresh gale of wind on a hot summer's day;" and *another*,<sup>2</sup> as one feeling no smart, washed his hands in the flame as though it had been cold water. And *another*,<sup>3</sup> who gave the noble reply to a friend who urged him to recant, "The life to come is more sweet, and the death to come is more bitter." What power? Thanks be to God, it was the power of *the Presence of Jesus*—the all-shielding, all-sustaining grace of their spiritually-present Saviour.

On the tombs of their noble, faithful martyrs the early Christians used to carve—

"In Jesu Christo obdormivit."  
(In Jesus Christ he fell asleep.)

"Oh ! precious tale of triumph this !  
And martyr-blood shed to achieve it,  
Of suffering past—of present bliss,  
'In Jesu Christo obdormivit.'  
  
Of cherished dead be mine the trust,  
Thrice-blessed solace to believe it,  
That I can utter o'er their dust,  
'In Jesu Christo obdormivit.'"

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<sup>1</sup> See *Bishop Ryle's Facts and Men.*

<sup>2</sup> John Rogers.

<sup>3</sup> John Hooper.

Miss  
Havergal.

Or, to come nearer home, look at Miss Frances Ridley Havergal. Listen to her last message to the good vicar of Swansea—"Mr. Morgan, tell young clergymen to preach a LIVING, LIVING CHRIST." Listen to her dying song—

"Jesus, I will trust Thee, . . .

. . .  
Jesus, I may trust Thee, . . .

. . .  
Jesus, I *do* trust Thee, . . .

Trust Thee with my soul."

Dr. Fox.

Listen to another last testimony—that of Dr. William Tilbury Fox, an eminent Christian physician, who left behind him a written request that in any obituary notice of him which might appear in the *Lancet*, his colleagues would insert the confession of his faith in Jesus Christ—and in these sceptical days, when *Science* is so often associated with *Scepticism*, this dying protest against *Unbelief* is of the utmost value—"I die a *Christian*, in the now, I fear, much-despised sense of that term, a simple believer in *Jesus Christ* as a PERSONAL, LIVING, and LOVING SAVIOUR, without any righteousness of my own, but perfect and secure in His; and 'I *know* in *Whom* I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him until that day.'" <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. i. 12.

But, thanks be to God, I have had the privilege of standing myself on these solemn, hallowed places—in the dying chambers of departing saints. Four in Widnes, Lancashire, I think of with special joy. At Widnes. They all had come to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel, and they all died rejoicing in the consciousness of His Personal Presence, whose glory seemed to fill the rooms of two of them in a remarkable manner. I think of another in London with equal joy, to whom a small book called “The Blood of Jesus”<sup>1</sup> had been blessed. At S. Brides’ E.C. He, too, died, resting calmly, amid distressing weakness, beneath the shadow of Christ’s Presence.

And the last moments of yet another, in Norwich, In Norwich. who is now safely gathered home, are still vividly present to my mind. One of her favourite pieces was, “Are you shining for Jesus, dear ones?” (F. R. H.) Her calm confidence in death found expression in Ps. xxiii.: “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, *for Thou art with me*, Thy rod and Thy staff, they shall comfort me.” Among her last words were: “Oh! no fear, no fear.” . . . “Yes, He has promised to be with me.” . . . “Oh, so happy; oh, so peaceful!” With the calm confidence of one whose foot is planted firmly on the sure Rock of Ages, she bade farewell

<sup>1</sup> Published by Messrs. Nisbet & Co.

Miserable  
comforters.

to all gathered around that solemn death-scene. Then, very soon her head fell softly amid the pillows. The Master Himself had come and folded her in His bosom. So He "gave" His weary, beloved one "sleep;" so her bright, ransomed spirit passed within the gates of the celestial city, "leaning upon her Beloved,"<sup>1</sup> rejoicing in the light of His countenance. These dear ones are all "with Christ, which is far better."<sup>2</sup> And when you and I come to lie down to die, we shall need something more than nature,—more than philosophy,—more than science,—more than cold icy logic upon which to rest the departing soul. Miserable comforters all these to soothe the dying pillow! We shall need the firm, eternal Rock of Ages beneath our feet. We, too, shall need the grace, the love, the power, the tender sympathy of Jesus Himself to soothe our dying pillow, to close our eyes when glazed in death, to whisper words of unfailing comfort and assurance. Give us the assurance, that "Jesus Himself"<sup>3</sup> draws aside the curtain and stands at our right hand as our Saviour, Keeper, and Guide to the very gates of glory, and we shall not die in the dark. With Him folding us gently in His bosom, and bearing us up in His everlasting arms through the floods of

<sup>1</sup> Song of Solomon viii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Phil. i. 23.

<sup>3</sup> S. Luke xxiv. 15, 36.

death—*then*, “AT EVENING TIME” (EVEN THE EVENING TIME OF DEATH) “IT SHALL BE LIGHT.”<sup>1</sup>

God grant, that we may be enabled, in that solemn hour, to bid a long, last farewell to all sublunary things, to our nearest and dearest earthly treasures, and then turn our eyes upon eternity with the words of President Edwards upon our hearts—Last Words of President Edwards. “Farewell all. And now, where is *Jesus of Nazareth, my best and unfailing Friend?*” Yes. *The Presence of Jesus* in the solemn hour of death! Oh, think of it—*Jesus only*,—in death,—through death,—beyond death,—for ever and ever. “There every flower of the heavenly garden will be turned Godwards, bathing its tints of loveliness in the glory that excelleth,” even the glory of His Presence. And this for ever and ever,—for ever and ever with saints and angels,—for ever and ever rejoicing in the eternal reunion of long-parted friends and relatives,—for ever and ever basking in the cloudless sunshine of a Father’s love,—for ever and ever growing in wisdom and knowledge,—for ever and ever chanting the praises of the “Lamb slain in the midst of the throne,”<sup>2</sup>—for ever and ever abiding in the consciousness of the *Presence of Jesus, the Lord of Life and Glory*, who cheered our desert path with the unfailing words—“My Presence shall go with thee,

<sup>1</sup> Zech. xiv. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. v. 6.



and I will give thee REST." Such is heaven. Jesus is its "all and in all." As it has been beautifully said—

"The light of heaven is in the face of Jesus.  
The melody of heaven is in the name of Jesus.  
The harmony of heaven is in the praise of Jesus.  
The theme of heaven is in the work of Jesus.  
The employment of heaven is in the service of Jesus.  
The way to heaven is in the blood of Jesus.  
The joy of heaven is in the PRESENCE OF JESUS.  
The fulness of heaven is in JESUS HIMSELF."

*There "thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting Light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended."*<sup>1</sup>

*"There shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lx. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xxii. 5.

VII.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

AND

*THE TWOFOLD REST.*

"For He (Christ) that is entered into His rest, He also hath ceased from His own works, as God did from His" (Heb. iv. 10).

"For we which have believed DO ENTER into rest" (Heb. iv. 3).

"I only enter into rest  
Obtained by labours done;  
I only claim the victory  
By Him so dearly won.

And, Lord, I seek a *holy* rest,  
A victory over sin:  
I seek that Thou alone shouldst reign  
O'er all, without, within."—R. H. H.

"It is not His will that we should yield to fretfulness, worry, anxiety, and sin; but that, amidst life's trials and temptations, we should be kept in an *unruffled calm*. Every day of our lives let us set this rest before us, and seek to enter in by faith and complete self-surrender to Christ. . . .

"The Rest set before us is consistent with Christian conflict. It is *not a Rest of inaction*; on the contrary, it is one in which, through the indwelling presence of the Spirit of God, all the powers of the soul are set in motion; it is a *Rest of complete confidence in Christ*."—F. P.

"O Rest, so true, so sweet!  
Would it were shared by all the weary world!  
'Neath shadowing banner of His love unfurled,  
We bend to kiss the Master's pierced feet;  
Then lean our love upon His boundless breast,  
And know God's Rest."—F. R. H., *Echoes from the Word*.

"O God, Thou hast made us for Thyself, and we rest not till we rest in THEE."—AUGUSTINE.

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (Heb. iv. 1).

VII.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

AND

*THE TWOFOLD REST.*

"My Presence shall go with thee, and I WILL GIVE THEE REST."

"Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me ; for I am meek and lowly of heart ; and ye shall FIND REST to your souls."

*A twofold Rest !* First, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest"—rest of pardon, acceptance for the weary and heavy-laden sinner, for "We who have believed DO *enter* into rest" (Heb. iv. 3). Then the deeper rest for the soul,—that is willing to become His scholar,—and who sits in soul-stillness at His feet,—takes joyfully His yoke,—learns to do His will,—and abides in His love. To such He says, not only, "I *will give*," but also, "Ye shall *find* rest to your souls."

"*The yoke gives the rest*, because the moment the soul yields itself to obey, the Lord Himself gives

Rev. Andrew  
Murray.

the strength and joy to do it. . . . *These two, consecration and faith, are the essential elements of the Christian life* (the only way into real rest)—*the giving up all to Jesus, the receiving all from Jesus.* It is not the yoke, but resistance to the yoke, that makes the difficulty (robs us of rest); the whole-hearted surrender to Jesus, as at once our Master and our Keeper, finds and secures the rest."

Rest! like New-Year's bells, pealing forth their gladsome song in silvery tones, may this word fill your heart with peace and joy.

Story of a  
Young Lion.

Rest from weariness and carking care! Rest from the subtle power of the world and temptation! Rest from the fear of death and ruling power of indwelling sin! I have read of a young lion, which nothing could awe or subdue but the *fixed eye, the presence* of his keeper. Accompanied by the keeper, you could go near, and he would crouch—(his nature still unchanged and thirsting for your blood)—trembling at your feet. Accompanied by the keeper, you could place your foot on his neck with safety; to approach him without the keeper would be instant death; so likewise, there are the cruel, savage lion-nature of indwelling sin harassing the Christian's soul, and the devouring lion-powers of the world without, both unchanged in their enmity against God and your soul; but the abiding presence of Jesus

with you will subdue and keep their power down beneath your feet. Beneath the eye, beneath the power of the Personal Presence, sin and the world must lie low in the dust. Victory is yours.

*"In Him is no sin ; he that abideth in Him sinneth not," i.e., does not live in the habitual practice of sin.*<sup>1</sup>

FRET NOT.

TRUST IN THE LORD.

DELIGHT THYSELF IN THE LORD.

COMMIT THY WAY TO THE LORD.

WAIT ON THE LORD.

REST IN THE LORD.<sup>2</sup>

"Thou sweet, beloved Will of God,  
My anchor-ground, my fortress-hill,  
My spirit's silent, fair abode,  
In thee I hide me and am still.

O Will, that willest good alone,  
Lead Thou the way, Thou guidest best :  
A little child, I follow on,  
And, trusting, lean upon Thy breast.

Thy beautiful, sweet Will, my God,  
Holds fast in its sublime embrace  
My captive will, a gladsome bird,  
Prisoned in such a realm of grace.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 John iii. 5-6.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xxxvii. 1, 3-5, 7, 34.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE.*

Within this place of certain good  
Love evermore expands her wings,  
Or, nestling in Thy perfect choice,  
Abides content with what it brings.

Oh lightest burden, sweetest yoke !  
It lifts, it bears my happy soul,  
It giveth wings to this poor heart ;  
My freedom is Thy grand control.

Upon God's Will I lay me down,  
As child upon its mother's breast ;  
No silken couch nor softest bed  
Could ever give me such deep rest.

Thy wonderful grand Will, my God,  
With triumph now I make it mine ;  
And faith shall cry a joyous Yes !  
To every dear command of Thine."

VIII.

*HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE*

AND

*DARK CLOUDS BETWEEN.*



"Whatever passes as a cloud between  
The mental eye of faith and things unseen,  
Making that brighter world to disappear,  
To seem less lovely, and its hope less dear ;  
This is our world, our idol, though it wear  
Affection's impress or devotion's air."

"The union of a believer with Christ can never be touched, for it is *of God* ; but his communion may be interrupted at any moment, for it is a thing between man and God."—DENHAM SMITH.

"When Christ *hideth Himself*, wait on, and cry out loudly till He return ; it is not time then to be carelessly patient ; I love it, to be grieved when He hideth His smiles ; yet believe His love in a patient on-waiting and waiting in the dark. You must learn to swim and hold up your head above the water, even when the sense of His presence is not with you to hold up your chin."

—S. Rutherford's *Letters*.

"He is not *hiding His face*, though His flowers (of divine consolation) be dry ; but he would have us be ever going again, through the gently dropping dews of prayer in the Holy Ghost, to knock at His garden-gate and ask Him for a fresh gift of His choicest flowers."—*Hewitson's Memoir*.

"Though a *backslider*, do not neglect the means of grace, for it is best to come where Jesus is ; keeping away from the fire will never warm you, and keeping away from Christ will never restore you."—DENHAM SMITH.

"As many a ship has been lost through simple *neglect*, so many a man has lost his soul through *ignorance of its condition*."

"To-morrow is an uncertain day."—THOMAS A KEMPIS.

"To-morrow I will seek the Lord,  
The foolish heart will say ;  
To-morrow may no time afford—  
Then seek the Lord to-day."

"To trifle is to live ;  
And is it then a trifle, too, to die ?"

"Haste, haste ! he lies in wait, he's at the door,  
Insidious death !"

"Time flies, death urges, knells call, Heaven invites,  
Hell threatens. . . . And yet man sleeps, as the storm rocked to rest—  
Throws years away."

"Rouse souls from slumber into thoughts of heaven."

—*Young's Night Thoughts*.

"shall we escape if we *neglect* so great salvation ?" (Heb. ii. 3.)

## VIII.

### HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE

#### AND

#### DARK CLOUDS BETWEEN.

1. *The Cloud betwixt the Christian and His Presence.* "With clouds He covereth the light; and commandeth it not to shine, by the *cloud that cometh betwixt.*"<sup>1</sup>

By God's grace, you have left the dark land of sin; by a definite act of faith you have intrusted the precious deposit into the hands of Him, who is able to keep it against that day.<sup>2</sup> You stand in grace, you are in Christ, you are a "*Christ-enclosed soul,*"<sup>3</sup> you have taken up a place of distinct separation, and are humbly walking in the path of glad, whole-hearted obedience.

*The promised Presence* is for you—Live daily in the light of God's love.

(1.) But there are moments, you say, when like

<sup>1</sup> Job xxxvi. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 2 Tim. i. 12.

<sup>3</sup> "The Believer is a *Christ-enclosed Man*"—GUENAL.

David.  
Job.  
Jeremiah.

David, and Job, and Jeremiah, shadows fall upon your soul; your sensible comforts fail, your joys are gone, and you are walking in spiritual darkness, with no light, no spiritual joy or comfort. You mourn bitterly *an Absent Saviour*. Be it so. This has been no strange experience to God's children through all ages. "Oh," says the afflicted Job, "that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when His candle shined upon my head, and when *by His light I walked through darkness*."<sup>1</sup> "*Thou didst hide Thy face, and I was troubled*."<sup>2</sup> "I will seek Him whom my soul loveth. I sought Him, *but I found Him not*. . . . *My Beloved had withdrawn Himself, and was gone*: my soul failed when He spake. *I sought Him, but I could not find Him: I called Him, but He gave me no answer*."<sup>3</sup>

"Also, when I cry and shout, *He shutteth out my prayer*."<sup>4</sup> And, listen to the most piercing cry of the great desolate heart, "*My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*"<sup>5</sup>

Nothing, nothing can compensate for the loss, or supposed loss of the Divine Presence.

"This is to be alone: this, this is solitude."

<sup>1</sup> Job xxix. 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Song of Solomon iii. 2, v. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxvii. 46.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. xxx. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Lam. iii. 8.

DARK CLOUDS BETWEEN : THE CHRISTIAN. 111

But, for your consolation, I ask, Were God's servants of old less dear to the heart of Jehovah? Were they less His beloved children because thus tried, because of "the cloud betwixt"? God forbid. As really His own, and as dear as ever. Look up, therefore, desolate heart, and let nature speak comfort to you. Behold the heavy, leaden clouds rolling across the sky; they hide the sun's disc, and sweep the brightest stars from your view, but who doubts, for a moment, that those heavenly lights still shine as brilliantly as ever, though obscured by the veil of mist, fog, or cloud? They are not absent, only hidden from view by "the cloud that cometh betwixt." It is precisely so in the spiritual world.

Unchange-  
able Love.

Behind the  
Clouds.

The presence of your ever-living, ever-loving Saviour, though veiled, shines behind the intervening clouds. "With Him there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."<sup>1</sup>

(2.) *Sometimes*, the distressing gloom and consequent tears for an *absent Saviour* are all of your gracious Father's wise ordering. In that case, all is well. Sit at His feet; and, gazing up into His face, through the tears of resignation, strive to say, "Even so, Father, so it seems good in Thy sight;"<sup>2</sup> and when the chastening has accomplished its appointed

<sup>1</sup> James i. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xi. 26.

work, there will come "the clear shining after rain."<sup>1</sup>  
*"In His light you shall see light."*

(3.) BUT SOMETIMES, the mists and fogs arise (as they even do in nature) from below and not from heaven, from your own corrupt heart, so full of sin and unbelief. Something earthly has come *between* the brightness of His presence and your soul. In that case, flee at once to His cross, bewail there your sin; seek fresh cleansing in His blood and renewal by His Holy Spirit. Remember, behind the murky fogs His face shines as brightly as ever. "I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."<sup>2</sup> Remember, *it is your privilege to dwell in the light of His countenance without a single cloud between.*

"Oh, it is His own self I pant after. Fellowship—living, constant, intimate fellowship with Him, is the cry He so often hears from the desolate void of my unloving heart. How do I loathe the sin which makes the atmosphere so misty—the cloud so thick and dark!"—*Life of Adelaide Newton*, p. 246.

A Persian  
Fable.

Once a Persian king proposed that there should be designs sent in to him for a temple to the sun. Many wondrous designs were produced, describing, in picture and form and figure and representation,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. xxiii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Mal. iii. 3.

the sun within the building ; but one design was this—something like a *crystal palace*, which admitted the light of the sun itself. Such is the true Christian—a temple of the Holy Ghost.

Oh, what joy unspeakable, should some reader of this little book become a temple of the Sun of Righteousness. But, remember, every door must be thrown open, every shutter thrown back, every blind drawn up, so that the Morning Sun of the Divine Presence may shine into every room, and every corner of your soul and life—(into the room of your daily life, into the room where you transact your business, into the drawing-room where you receive company), so that the strong light of His blessed Presence may pass through your whole being, and out to the dark world around, constraining you to be henceforth “ever only all for Jesus.”

“IN HIS FAVOUR IS LIFE.”<sup>1</sup>

“Higher than the highest heavens,  
Deeper than the deepest sea,  
Lord, Thy love at last has conquered ;  
Grant me now my soul’s petition,  
*None of self, and all of Thee.*”

2. *The Cloud betwixt the Backslider and His Presence.* Once you enjoyed the sweet Presence of God, but you have gone back into sin and the

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxx. 5.

Samson  
forsaken.

world—into darkness and misery. Unutterably sad, indeed, is your present condition! unspeakably great your loss! but, alas! the greatest loss of all is the *Absence of your Saviour*. As truly as He left Samson, when he lay slumbering in the lap of the ungodly Delilah, He has left you. "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early."<sup>1</sup>

The gentle dove, during the Deluge, could not feed on carrion; nor could she find rest for the sole of her foot amid the dead floating about on the dark billows of wrath; and neither can the gentle, Holy Spirit of Jesus dwell with allowed, cherished sin and worldliness. *You mourn an absent Saviour.*

The Presence  
departing  
from the  
Temple.

*Behold this picture!* Turn to the Book of Ezekiel, chap. ix. 3. Bear in mind, that Israel had sinned grievously and backslidden.<sup>2</sup> What was the result? The Lord's glorious Presence, which was with them in the past,<sup>3</sup> *was now being withdrawn*. See that Presence in ix. 3,—it has retired from the resting-place in the Holy of Holies,—it stands on the threshold of the house, lingering sorrowfully, unwilling to depart; in chap. x. 19 it has taken its departure from the Temple, right through the midst of the

<sup>1</sup> Hosea v. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. chap. viii. 3, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. viii. 4.

city, still retiring farther and farther away from the original dwelling-place in the Holy of Holies, until in chap. xi. 23 it has departed from both temple and city, and rests not until it has reached the height of the Mount of Olives. Then the Divine Presence,—sorrowfully, reluctantly driven out by the sins of backsliding Israel,—“stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city.” Oh! backsliding child of God, take this home as a true picture of yourself. Idols occupy the throne of your heart, “every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all idols, are pourtrayed upon the walls of your heart round about,” and *the Presence of Jesus has gone*; however sorrowfully, He *has gone*. His Presence is not yours to-day, for *sin, sin*, has come *between*.

But oh! thanks be to God, there is hope,—there is mercy for backsliding Israel upon their hearty repentance, abandonment of sin, and renewed consecration to God. These are the conditions upon which the Divine Presence returns, so we read (in chap. xlv. 10) of “the Prince in the midst of them,” and (chap. xlviii. 35) “the Name of that city from that day shall be—*The Lord is there*.”

Dear, dear friend, even to your breast the gentle dove may yet return, you may yet enjoy the sweetness of His indwelling power. *But there are condi-*



tions. Listen to the golden promises made to the backslider: "Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, I will not cause Mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and will not keep anger for ever. *Only acknowledge thine iniquity* that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. . . . Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you."<sup>1</sup> "If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, *return unto Me.*"<sup>2</sup> "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto Him,* Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves (praise) of our lips; Asshur shall not save us . . . In thee the fatherless findeth mercy. *I will heal their backsliding,* I will love them freely; for Mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."<sup>3</sup> Only appropriate these promises, only obey the Divine call, only fulfil these conditions, and once more Jesus will become the Abiding Guest of your heart; only repent, only have done with sin and the world, only come and lay all at the foot of the Cross, only by faith place the *blood between*, only reconsecrate your all to

<sup>1</sup> Jer. iii. 12-14.<sup>2</sup> Jer. iv. 1.<sup>3</sup> Hosea xiv.

His service, and *in your case* too the promise shall be abundantly fulfilled, "My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

*"So will we not go back from Thee; quicken us, and we will call upon Thy name. Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts, cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved."*<sup>1</sup>

### 3. *Clouds between the Sinner and His Presence.*

Dear friend, how *can you* enjoy the sweet Presence of the ever-living, ever-loving Saviour, when there is *nothing but evil between*; sin, and nothing but sin *between*; the dense fogs of sin and the world, the lowering clouds of guilt and just condemnation hanging in sackcloth robes *between*?

A story is told of an old Norse king, sitting one night in his great hall, when the tempest was raging furiously without; the great fire threw its glare far out into the dark recesses of the hall, all the brighter for the storm and darkness around. While the king talked with his councillors, a bird flew in and passed over them and out again at the great open window opposite. "Such," said the king, "is the life of man—out of darkness into light, and then out of light into darkness, lost in the blackness and storm again." "Yes, sir," said an old courtier, "but the bird has its nest beyond."

An old Norse King.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxx. 18, 19.

Oh, dear friend, have you your nest beyond? Have you found an abiding shelter in the deep cleft of the Rock of Ages—in the great, warm, loving heart of Jesus? Without a home in Jesus you are like the bird building its nest on the brittle bough, on the tree marked by the woodman for destruction. The ruthless woodman's axe rings at the foot, the tree falls, and the homeless bird flies through the forest pouring forth her plaintive tale of woe. But *with a home in Him*, you are like the lofty-soaring eagle which builds her nest in the deep cleft on the giddy eyrie; let the storm rage ever so furiously, let the floods thunder and rock themselves into mad fury like some seething, churning caldron at the foot, let the wild winds blow a hurricane aloft,—none of these things move the eagle safely sheltered in the secure retreat in the cleft of the rock. “He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of the rocks.”<sup>1</sup>

“Oh, my dove, thou art in the clefts of the Rock”<sup>2</sup>

“Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is *the Rock of Ages* (marg. rendering).<sup>3</sup>

Again I ask—Have you your *home* beyond, even in *Christ*?

An American  
Capitalist.

A story is told of an American capitalist, who had

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxxiii. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Song of Solomon ii. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. xxvi. 4.

risen from the ranks to the possession of great wealth. He took a friend to the top of his mansion, the top of which was flat, and where he often went out. He told him how he came there as a poor boy years ago, and what he had acquired. He pointed out in one direction to fields covered with flocks and herds, and said, "All those fields and all those cattle are mine." In another direction he pointed to a thriving town, with its factories and warehouses and dwelling-places, and said, "*All is mine.*" At length his friend pointed upwards and said, "*What have you there?*" Ah! then the rich man was silent. Over seventy years of age, and yet no treasure, no home there! No prospect of heaven! All his possessions were of the earth, very soon to be left behind! Dear friend, *what have you there?* Nothing! Nothing! No Father in an all-loving God. No Saviour in the Lord Jesus, who came to save the perishing—the lost, such as yourself! No Sanctifier, no Comforter in the Holy Spirit! *No home in heaven, for you have no home in God's heart now!* Oh, dear, dear friend, "*How shall you escape, if you NEGLECT so great salvation!*"<sup>1</sup> The word, notice, is not "reject" or "despise," but "*neglect.*" Thousands who would never think of *rejecting*, are losing their souls, and following the devil's guiding hand down the winding staircase

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ii. 3.

into hell, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,"<sup>1</sup> *through sheer neglect of their souls.*

Degeneration.

There is a great chapter in Professor Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" on "Degeneration," which is eminently to the point. Let me cull a few solemn thoughts. He shows that nature punishes *neglect* with the utmost severity. Neglect, he argues, a flock of the most lovely pigeons of all kinds and every shade of colour, and shut them off in some desolate island for years, and they will *degenerate*, and at last return to the original bird—the dark, slaty-blue rock pigeon.

The rose.

"*Neglect* your strawberries and roses for a number of years, and the one will return to the small, wild strawberry of the woods, and the other into the primitive dog-rose of the hedges. *Neglect* a garden plant, and it will change into a worse plant; *neglect* a bird, and it will change into a worse bird; *neglect* a domestic animal, and it will change into a wild and worthless form."

The mole.

The burrowing mole, for instance, Mr. Drummond goes on to say, is supposed in times past to have neglected to use its eyes; it loves to live in darkness beneath the surface of the earth, and Nature has taken her revenge—she has closed its eyes.

"From him that hath not shall be taken away

<sup>1</sup> Mark ix. 48.

even that which he hath ; ” <sup>1</sup> “ take the talent from him.” Or, again, the drowning man fails to escape because he has *neglected* to learn to swim—neglected to grasp the life-belt. The drown-  
ing man.

“ *How shall we escape*, IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION ? ” The Bible does not say that to miss the great salvation it is necessary to be *very bad, exceedingly wicked*, to sow wildly to the flesh ; quite sufficient, it seems to say, that you *sow nothing* ; that you fold your arms and go to sleep, and neglect to sow ; and the ground of the soul will run wild and soon be drained of its virtue by the rank native weeds. *Neglect* to grasp the life-belt of salvation, and how can you escape ?

“ *If we neglect !* ” “ *Neglect* the body, and it will degenerate to a state of savagery ; *neglect* the mind, and it will degenerate to a state of imbecility and madness ; *neglect* the conscience, and it will run off into lawlessness and vice ; *neglect* the soul, and it must drop off into ruin and decay.”

Oh, dear friend, do not these thoughts come home to our hearts and consciences ? This is the sin which lies at the door. You have *neglected* to pray, *neglected* the Bible, *neglected* the house of God on Sunday, *neglected* His appointed means of grace, *neglected* your Saviour and His precious atoning

<sup>1</sup> Matt xxv. 29.

blood, *neglected* the Holy Spirit, *neglected* the strait gate and the narrow way to heaven, *neglected* to *live to the glory of God*.<sup>1</sup> No wonder, therefore, that the devil rocks you into fatal slumber; no wonder that there are *clouds between*. "*How shall you escape?*"

Oh! be wise; *no longer neglect the great salvation*, but *to-day*, "*while it is called to-day*," let the blood of Jesus come *between*—let the Cross come *between*—*not* the blood and your own merits—*not* the blood and your repentance, morality, honesty of life, good resolutions, church membership or sacraments—let the *blood alone*, which atones for the soul,<sup>2</sup> —let that Divine, all-precious, all-costly, all-meritorious blood of God's dear Son come *between* your needs and God's demands—*between* your soul and sin, guilt, and condemnation, and at once all will be rolled away like a thick cloud, and remembered against you no more for ever, and you shall enjoy the sweet Presence of Jesus with nothing—nothing but *love between*.

S. Patrick's  
Prayer.

I conclude with the PRAYER ascribed to S. PATRICK, so very dear to my heart, and may it become so to every reader of this little book:—

<sup>1</sup> The charge against King Belshazzar was not that of drunkenness or profligacy. It was this: "The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast THOU NOT GLORIFIED." Cf. Dan. v. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Lev. xvii. 11.

"To-day may the strength of God pilot me,—the power of God preserve me,—the wisdom of God instruct me,—the eye of God watch over me,—the ear of God hear me,—the word of God give me sweet talk,—the hand of God defend me,—the way of God guide me. Christ be with me,—Christ before me,—Christ behind me,—Christ in me,—Christ under me,—Christ over me,—Christ on my right hand,—Christ on my left hand,—Christ on this side,—Christ on that side,—Christ at my back,—Christ in the heart of every person to whom I speak,—Christ in the mouth of every person who speaks to me,—Christ in the eye of every person who looks upon me,—Christ in the ear of every person who hears me to-day." What a God-glorifying, a Spirit-breathed and Spirit-honouring prayer, with which to begin, continue, and end the year! Oh, may ours be a bright, happy life beneath the warm, cheering light of the *Presence of the ever-living Jesus*, with nothing, nothing of sin, self, or the world between! Oh, may we have grace to go forth bravely into the unknown future, with *our hand clasped in the warm, loving hand of Christ, our sleepless Keeper*, saying, as a little blind girl once said, when asked if she was not afraid to travel to London in the dark, "Why should I fear when *my Father is near me and He holds my hand?*"

May it be, moreover, our constant joy to go forth



in Christ's name amidst the lowering clouds, mists and fogs, and dark nights of sin, unbelief, guilt, and misery, which hide the bright rays of the Sun of Righteousness from a fallen world, and tell them, and plead with them, and compel them to come, first to "the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel,"<sup>1</sup> and then to the *Abiding Home of the Personal Presence of Jesus, with nothing, nothing but LOVE between.*

"Nothing between, Lord, nothing between ;  
Let me Thy glory see,  
Draw my soul close to Thee,  
Then speak in love to me,—  
Nothing between.

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between ;  
Let not earth's din and noise  
Stifle Thy still small voice ;  
In it let me rejoice,—  
Nothing between.

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between ;  
Nothing of earthly care,  
Nothing of tear or prayer,  
No robe that *self* may wear,—  
Nothing between.

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between ;  
Unbelief disappear,  
Vanish each doubt and fear,  
Fading when Thou art near,—  
Nothing between.

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<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii. 24.

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between ;  
Shine with unclouded ray,  
Chasing each mist away,  
O'er my whole heart bear sway,—  
Nothing between.

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between ;  
Thus may I walk with Thee,  
Thee only may I see,  
Thine only let me be,—  
Nothing between.

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between,  
Till Thine eternal light,  
Rising on earth's dark night,  
Bursts on my open sight,—  
Nothing between.

Nothing between, Lord, nothing between,  
Till, the last conflict o'er,  
I stand on Canaan's shore,  
With Thee for evermore,—  
Nothing between."

**" Farewell ! in hope and love,  
In faith, and peace, and prayer,  
Till we whose home is ours above,  
Unite us there."**



## NOTE.

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I AM constrained to add the following touching *pastoral letter*, by the late Rev. W. H. Hewitson, Protestant missionary to the Portuguese in Madeira, "which is a touching illustration of the power, fullness, and unction wherewith he preached *Christ*—most touching also as being the last message delivered to the little church in the land of their fathers." I add it with the persuasion, that the letter in which "CHRIST IS ALL AND IN ALL," shall again bear the seal of God's blessing:—

"DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,— . . . It is true that formerly ye were children of darkness, dragged along to eternal perdition by the prince of darkness; but now ye are children of light, being born of the Spirit by the Word of the *living God*. Walk in a way worthy of the Father of Lights, who shone into your hearts to enlighten you in the knowledge of His divine glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

Walk constantly, very dear brethren, after our beloved Lord Jesus Christ; for He assures you, in the Gospel of John viii. 12, 'I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.' It is evident, then, that we cannot walk in the saving light which brings us eternal life without continuing to walk after Christ.

"Light, life, salvation, the hope of glory, all spiritual and eternal blessings, are found in Christ Jesus our Lord; neither can they be found anywhere else. . . . Whatever blessing you need, seek from Christ Jesus. It hath pleased the Father that in Him should be fully and abundantly all things. In Christ dwelleth all the grace and glory of the Godhead bodily. It is in Him ye are full.

"If ye depart from Jesus, ye are poor, miserable, blind, and naked — ye have nothing; coming to Jesus, ye become partakers of His riches, His white robes, His light, wisdom, happiness, joy, grace, and love, His kingdom and glory. Come, therefore, nearer and nearer to Jesus, and never leave off living and walking with Him. Be very close to His pierced side. Hide yourselves within His heart; bathe your souls in the waves of His eternal love; bathe your consciences in His blood—bathe them every morning and evening—bathe them continually. There is no pardon, none, for those who will not take it solely from the blood of Jesus; because, without shedding of His precious

blood there is no remission of sin, nor can any sinner be ransomed.

“If you do not trust in Christ only, who about eighteen hundred years ago died on the Cross for our sins—the Just for the unjust—you cannot be saved. Christ is the only Saviour, and Christ saves none but only through His blood. If you trust in your tears, prayers, works, persecutions, or tribulations borne for the sake of Jesus—if you trust in such things you are certainly wrong, and walk far from the way of salvation. Such things are not Christ—such things are not your Saviour. Do not trust in them, but only in Christ; for out of Christ there is no salvation whatever.

“It is good to shed tears of sadness, thinking on your sins; but shed them looking to Christ crucified. It is good to pray, and to pray and pray more earnestly; but you ought to pray, trusting only on the merits of Christ. It is good to do the good works of faith and love; it is good to increase more and more in fortitude, charity, purity, and meekness, but see you don't put any confidence in your own works. Put all your confidence and hope in the perfected work of the holy Son of God. Confidence in your own works will bring to you condemnation and death. Faith in the death of Jesus Christ will make us partakers of the merits of His death, and consequently of the blessings of His resurrection. It is good, if necessary, to suffer persecution, shame, and death itself for the sake of

the name of Jesus. But we ought always to remember that it is not for the sake of our personal sorrows and sufferings, *but only for the sake of the sufferings which Christ endured* that we are saved.

“In Christ we have redemption through His blood—the complete forgiveness of our sins. In Christ ‘all things are ours.’ Out of Christ we have nothing. Do you wish for pardon and peace?—go to Christ. In Him you will find all you want. Do you wish for light and wisdom?—you do wish to understand more the meaning of the Word of God?—go to Christ. He will send you the Spirit of light and truth. Do you wish for growth in grace and holiness—more faith to overcome sin within and the world without?—go, my brethren, go again and again, to Christ. Christ has for you all the gifts of faith, of strength, of grace, of holiness. Anything you want, either for the soul or for the body—for the life which now is, or for that which is to come—go to Christ; all things are found in Christ. Christ is ready to give you all things abundantly. To be far from Christ is to be far from light, from life, from mercy, and from heaven; to be far from Christ is to be near death, misery, hell; to be without Christ is to be without God, without hope in the world. If we have Christ, we have all; without Christ, we have nothing. You can be happy without money, without liberty, without parents, and without friends, if Christ is yours. If you have not Christ, neither money, nor liberty,

nor parents, nor friends, can make you happy. Christ with a chain is liberty; liberty without Christ is a chain. Christ without anything is riches; all things without Christ is poverty indeed.

"Therefore, my brethren, 'persevere in the Lord with full purpose of heart.' 'Be firm in the faith, and strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus.' 'All things are yours, whether it be the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come—all are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.' 'Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' Christ, who loved, still loves, and will love us for ever, is Lord over all in heaven and in earth. Therefore fear no evil.

"Be steadfast, waiting on the Lord. Now you are persecuted; wait with patience, beloved brethren, a little longer. The Lord is about to come to judge the earth. 'Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all kindreds shall wail because of Him. Even so. Amen.' The Lord grant that



you may be filled with the Holy Spirit, following after holiness, having compassion on your enemies, praying for them that they may be saved, waiting for the coming of the Lord. Pray for me, that I may be filled with the Spirit of God. I endeavour to pray for you, remembering all your afflictions. Grace be with every one of you.—Your brother that loves you,  
W. H. HEWITSON."

From "Memoir of Rev. W. H. Hewitson," 6th ed., pp. 132-134.

THE END.

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